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THE SOIL.

From Photograph of a Boy on entering the School, now a respectable Tradesman.

Seed-Time & Harvest

OF

RAGGED SCHOOLS

OR

A THIRD PLEA

WITH

NEW EDITIONS OF THE FIRST & SECOND PLEAS.

BY

THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

EDINBURGH:
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK.
1860.

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TO

M. E. L.

WHO HAS HER NAME GRAVEN

AT FULL LENGTH

ON THE

GRATEFUL HEARTS OF MANY CHILDREN SAVED

BY MEANS OF THAT

ORIGINAL RAGGED SCHOOL,

WHICH HAS OWED

SO MUCH OF ITS SUCCESS

TO HER GENEROUS, ZEALOUS, AND

UNTIRING LABOURS.

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Seed-Time & Harvest

OR

PLEAS FOR RAGGED SCHOOLS.

FIRST PLEA.

ON approaching Edinburgh from the west, after the general features which distance presents,—dome, and spire, and antique piles of building, the Castle standing in the foreground, while Arthur Seat raises its lion-like back between the city and the sea,—the first object which attracts the eyes of a stranger is a structure of exquisite and surpassing beauty. It might be a palace for our Queen :—it is an hospital. Near by, embowered in wood, stands an edifice of less pretensions, but also great extent :—it is another

hospital. Within a bow-shot of that, again, some fine open towers rise from the wood over a fair structure, with its Grecian pillars and graceful portico :—it is another hospital. Now in the city, and wheeling round the base of the Castle rock, he drives on by Lauriston. Not far away, on the outskirts of the town, pleasantly planted in a beautiful park, bordered with trees, stands an old-fashioned building: —it is another hospital. In his way along Lauriston, within a stone-cast of him, his eye catches the back of a large and spacious edifice, which looks beautifully out on the Meadows, the low Braid Hills, and the distant Pentlands :—it is another hospital. A few turns of the wheel, and before him, within a fine park, or rather ornamental garden, stands the finest structure of our town,—a master-piece of Inigo Jones,—with a princely revenue of £15,000 a-year :—it is another hospital. The carriage now jostles over a stone ; the stranger turns his head, and sees, but some hundred yards away, a large Dutch-like structure, stretching out its long lines of windows, with the gilded ship, the sign of commerce, for weather-vane, on its summit :—that is another hospital. Our friend concludes, and not without some reason, that, instead of the "Modern Athens," Edinburgh might be called the City of Hospitals.

I have no quarrel at present with these institutions: their management is in the hands of wise, excellent, and honourable men; and, in so far as they fail to accomplish the good intended, it is not that they are mismanaged. The management is not bad; but in some of its elements the system itself is vicious. God never made men to be reared in flocks, but in families. Man is not a gregarious animal, other than that he herds together with his race in towns, a congeries of families. Born, as he is, with domestic affections, whatever interferes with their free play is an evil to be shunned, and, in its moral and physical results, to be dreaded. God framed and fitted man to grow up, not under the hospital, but the domestic roof,—whether that roof be the canvas of an Arab tent, the grassy turf of a Highland shieling, or the gilded dome of a palace. And as man was no more made to be reared in an hospital than the human foot to grow in a Chinese shoe, or the human body to be bound in ribs of iron or whalebone,—acting in both cases in contravention of God's law,—you are as sure in the first case to inflict injury on his moral, as in the second on his physical constitution. They commit a grave mistake who forget that injury as inevitably results from flying in the face of a moral or mental, as of a physical law. So long as rice is

rice, you cannot rear it on the bald brow of a hill-top: it loves the hollows and the valleys, with their water-floods; and so long as man is man, more or less of injury will follow the attempt to rear him in circumstances for which his Maker never adapted him.

But apart from this, who and what are the children that, under the roof of these crowded hospitals, receive shelter, food, clothing, and instruction? It is much deplored by many, and can be denied by none, that in some of these hospitals not a few of the inmates are the children of those who are able, and ought to be willing,—and, but for the temptations these institutions present, would be ready,—to train up their children as olive plants around the domestic table, and rear them within the tender, kind, holy, and heaven-blessed circle of a domestic home. There are nursed those precious affections toward parents, brothers, sisters, and smiling babes, which, for man's good in this life, and the wellbeing of society, are worth more than all Greek and Roman lore. I cannot better convey my ideas and feelings on this matter than by saying, that when a Governor of Heriot's Hospital,—an hospital which enjoys the care and attention both of the Town Council and the city clergy,—I was astonished to be applied to by a

respectable man on behalf of his son. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not much blame parents and guardians for availing themselves of these hospitals, even when they might do otherwise. A well-furnished table, lodging the most comfortable, a first-rate education, in some instances valuable bursaries, and occasionally, when launched into the world, a sum of money to float the favoured pupil on,—these present the temptation to tear the child from a mother's side, and send it away from a father's care, which it is not easy to resist. Still, to resume my narrative, I was amazed to receive such an application from such a quarter. The applicant was a sober and excellent man, living in what the world would count respectable circumstances. Knowing this, nevertheless I asked him, "Can you give your boy porridge in the morning?" "Yes," said he, surprised at such a question. "Potatoes to dinner?" "Certainly." "Porridge at night?" He looked astonished: he knew, as I and all his neighbours did, that he was able to do a great deal more. "Then," I said, "my friend, were I you, it should not be till they had laid me in my coffin that boy of mine should lose the blessings of a father's fireside, and be cast amid the dangers of a public hospital." I may perhaps add, that I thought him a

wise man, for he took my advice. And before leaving these hospitals, I think it right also to add, in justice to the management of Heriot's Hospital, and to the honour of Mr. Duncan Maclaren, by whom the scheme was proposed and carried, that some £3000 a-year is applied to the maintenance of schools scattered up and down the city, where the children of decent tradesmen, mechanics, and labourers, receive a good *gratis* education.

Now, to resume, for convenience sake, the company of my stranger friend. Skirting along the ruins of the old city wall, and passing down the Vennel, we descend into the Grassmarket,—a large, capacious *place*, with the exception of some three or four modern houses, still standing as it did two centuries ago,—the most perfect specimen in our city of the olden time. Its old massive fronts, reared as if in picturesque contempt of modern uniformity,—some with the flat roofs of the East, and others of the Flemish school, with their sharp and lofty gables topped by the rose, the thistle, and the *fleur de lis*, —still look down on that square as in the days when it was one sea of heads, every eye turned to the great black gallows, which rose high over all, and from which, amid the hushed and awful silence of assembled thousands, rose the last psalm of a

hero of the Covenant, who had come there to play the man.

In a small well-conditioned town, with the exception of some children basking on the pavement, and playing with the dogs that have gone over with them to enjoy the sunny side, between the hours of ten and one, you miss the Scripture picture of "boys and girls playing in the street." Not so in the Grassmarket. In two-thirds of the shops, on one side of this square (for we have counted them) spirits are sold. The sheep are near the slaughter-house, —the victims are in the neighbourhood of the altars. The mouth of almost every *close* is filled with loungers, worse than Neapolitan lazzaroni,—bloated and brutal figures, ragged and wretched old men, bold and fierce-looking women, and many a half-clad mother, shivering in cold winter with her naked feet on the frozen pavement, and a skeleton infant in her arms. On a summer day, when in the blessed sunshine and warm air misery itself will sing, dashing in and out of these closes, careering over the open ground, engaged in their rude games, arrayed in flying drapery, here a leg out and there an arm, are crowds of children. Their thin faces tell how ill they are fed. Their fearful oaths tell how ill they are reared. Yet the merry laugh, the hearty shout, and

screams of delight, as some unfortunate urchin, at leap-frog, measures his length upon the ground, tell that God made childhood to be happy, and how even misery will forget itself in the buoyancy of youth.

We get hold of one of these boys. Poor fellow! it is a bitter day; and he has neither shoes nor stockings. His naked feet are red, swollen, cracked, ulcerated with the cold; a thin, thread-worn jacket, with its gaping rents, is all that protects his breast; beneath his shaggy bush of hair he shows a face sharp with want, yet sharp also with intelligence beyond his years. That little fellow has learned to be already self-supporting. He has studied the arts; —he is a master of imposture, lying, begging, stealing. Small blame to him, but much to those who have neglected him,—he had otherwise pined and perished. So soon as you have satisfied him that you are not connected with the police, you ask him, "Where is your father?" Now, hear his story,—and there are hundreds can tell a similar tale. "Where is your father?" "He is dead, Sir." "Where is your mother?" "Dead too." "Where do you stay?" "Sister and I, and my little brother, live with granny." "What is she?" "She is a widow woman." "What does she do?" "Sells sticks, Sir." "And can she keep you all?" "No." "Then

how do you live?" "Go about and get bits of meat, sell matches, and sometimes get a trifle from the carriers for running an errand." "Do you go to school?" "No, never was at school; attended sometimes a Sabbath-school, but have not been there for a long time." "Do you go to church?" "Never was in a church." "Do you know who made you?" "Yes, God made me." "Do you say your prayers?" "Yes, mother taught me a prayer before she died; and I say it to granny afore I lie down." "Have you a bed?" "Some straw, Sir."

Our stranger friend is astonished at this,—not we. Alas! we have ceased to be astonished at any amount of misery suffered, or suffering, in our overgrown cities. You have, says he, splendid hospitals, where children are fed, and clothed, and educated, whose parents, in instances not a few, could do all that for them; you have beautiful schools for the gratis education of the children of respectable tradesmen and mechanics: what provision have you made for these children of crime, misery, and misfortune? Let us go and see the remedy which this rich, enlightened, Christian City has provided for such a crying evil. We blush, as we tell them there is none. Let us explain ourselves. Such children cannot pay for education, nor avail themselves of a

gratis one, even though offered, That urchin must beg and steal, or he starves. With a number like himself, he goes of a morning as regularly to that work as the merchant to his shop or the tradesman to his place of labour. They are turned out,—driven forth sometimes,—to get their meat, like sheep to the hills, or cattle to the field; and if they don't bring home a certain supply, a drunken father and a brutal beating await them.

For example, I was returning from a meeting one night, about twelve o'clock in a fierce blast of wind and rain. In Princes Street, a shivering boy with a piteous voice, pressed me to buy a tract. I asked the child why he was out in such a night, and at such an hour. He had not got his money; he dared not go home without it; he would rather sleep in a stair all night. I thought, as we passed a lamp, that I had seen him before. I asked him if he went to church. "Sometimes to Mr. Guthrie's," was his reply. On looking again, I now recognized him as one I had occasionally seen in the Cowgate Chapel. Muffled up to meet the weather, he did not recognize me. I asked him what his father was? "I have no father, Sir; he is dead." His mother? "She is very poor." "But why keep you out here?" Then reluctantly the truth came

out. I knew her well, and had visited her wretched dwelling. She was a tall, dark, gaunt gipsy-looking woman, who, notwithstanding a cap of which it could be but premised that it had once been white, and a gown that it had once been black, had still some traces of one who had seen better days; but, now she was a drunkard. Sin had turned her into a monster; and she would have beaten that poor child within an inch of death, if he had been short of the money, by her waste of which she starved him, and fed her own accursed vices.

Now, by this anecdote illustrating to my stranger friend the situation of these unhappy children, I added that, nevertheless, they might get education, and secure some measure both of common and Christian knowledge. But mark how, and where. Not as in the days of our blessed Saviour, when the tender mother brought her child for his blessing. The jailor brings them now. Their only passage to school is through the Police Office; their passport is a conviction of crime; and in this Christian and enlightened city it is only within the dreary walls of a prison that they are secure either of school or Bible. When one thinks of their own happy boys at home, bounding free on the green, and breathing the fresh air of heaven,—or of the little fellow that

climbs a father's knee, and asks the oft-repeated story of Moses or of Joseph,—it is a sad thing to look in through the eyelet of a cell-door, on the weary solitude of a child spelling its way through the Bible. It makes one sick to hear men sing the praises of the fine education of our prisons. How much better and holier were it to tell us of an education that would save the necessity of a prison-school! I like well to see the life-boat, with her brave and devoted crew; but with far more pleasure, from the window of my old country manse, I used to look out at the Bell Rock Tower, standing erect amid the stormy waters, where in the mists of day the bell was rung, and in the darkness of the night the light was kindled. Thus mariners were not saved from the wreck, but saved from being wrecked at all. Instead of first punishing crime, and then, through means of a prison education, trying to prevent its repetition, we appeal to men's common sense, and common interest, to humanity, and Christianity, if it were not better to support a plan which would reverse this process, and which seeks to prevent, that there may be no occasion to punish.

It may be asked, would not this be accomplished by the existence and multiplication of schools, where, in circumstances of necessity, a gratis education may

be obtained? We answer, Certainly not. Look how the thing works, and is working. You open such a school in some poor locality of the city; where among the more decent and well-provided children there is a number of shoeless, shirtless, capless, ragged boys, as wild as desert savages. The great mass of those in the district you have not swept into your school; but granting that through moral influence, or otherwise, you do succeed in bringing out a small per centage of these,—mark what happens. In a few days this and that one fail to answer at roll-call. Now, an essential element of successful education is regular attendance. In truth, the world would get on as ill were the sun to run his course to-day, and take a rest or play the truant to-morrow, and be so irregular in his movements that no one could count upon his appearance, as will the work of education with an attendance at school constantly broken and interrupted. Feeling this, the teacher seeks the abode of the child, climbs some three or four dark stairs, and at length finds himself in such an apartment as we have often seen; there is neither board, nor bed, nor Bible. Around the cinders, gathered from the street, sit some half-naked children,—his poor ragged pupil among the number. "Your child," says

he to the mother, "has been away from school." Now let the Christian public listen to her reply. "I could not afford to keep him there; he *maun* do something for his meat." I venture to say, I confidently affirm, that there are now many hundreds of children in these circumstances in Edinburgh. I ask the Christian public, What are we to do? One of two things we must do. Look at them. First we may leave the boy alone. Begging, the trade in which he is engaged, being next neighbour to thieving, he soon steals. He is apprehended and cast into prison; and having been marched along the public street, shackled to a policeman, and returned to society with the jail-brand on his brow, any tattered shred of character that hung loose about him before is now lost. As the French say, and all the world knows, "*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute.*" He descends, from step to step, till a halter closes his unhappy career; or he is passed away to a penal settlement, the victim of a poverty for which he was not to blame, and of a neglect on the part of others for which a righteous God will one day call them to judgment.

There is another alternative; and it is that we advocate. Remove the obstruction which stands between that poor child and the schoolmaster and

the Bible,—roll away the stone that lies between the living and the dead. Since he cannot attend your school unless he starves, give him food; feed him, in order to educate him; let it be food of the plainest, cheapest kind; but by that food open his way; by that powerful magnet to a hungry child, draw him to school.

Strolling one day with a friend among the romantic scenery of the Crags and green valleys around Arthur Seat, we came at length to St. Anthony's Well, and sat down on the great black stone beside it, to have a talk with the ragged boys who pursue their calling there. Their *tinnies* were ready with a draught of the clear cold water, in hope of a halfpenny. We thought it would be a kindness to them, and certainly not out of character in us, to tell them of the living water that springeth up to life eternal; and of Him who sat on the stone of Jacob's Well, and who stood in the Temple and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." By way of introduction, we began to question them about schools. As to the boys themselves, one was fatherless,—the son of a poor widow; the father of the other was alive, but a man of low habits and bad character. Both were poorly clothed. The one had never been at school; the other had sometimes

attended a Sabbath-school. These two little fellows were self-supporting,—living by such shifts as they were then engaged in. Encouraged by the success of Sheriff Watson, who had the honour to lead this enterprise, the idea of a Ragged School was then floating in my brain; and so, with reference to the scheme, and by way of experiment, I said, "Would you go to school, if, besides your learning, you were to get breakfast, dinner, and supper there?" It would have done any man's heart good to have seen the flash of joy that broke from the eyes of one of them,—the flush of pleasure on his cheek, as, hearing of three sure meals a-day, the boy leapt to his feet, and exclaimed, "Aye will I, Sir, and bring the haill *land* too;"* and then, as if afraid I might withdraw what seemed to him so large and munificent an offer, he exclaimed, "I'll come for but my dinner, Sir."

I have abundant statistics before me to prove that there are many hundreds of children in this town in circumstances as hopeless as those I describe. They must be fed, in order to receive that common moral and religious education, without which, humanly speaking, they are ruined both for this world and the next.

* The whole tenement.

How many there are in still more hopeless circumstances, I never knew, till I had gone to see one of the saddest sights a man could look on. The Night Asylum was not then established; but the houseless, the inhabitants of arches and stair-foots, —those, like the five boys lately sent to prison, who had no home but an empty cellar in Shakspeare Square,—found, when they sought it, or dared to seek it, a shelter in the Police Office. I had often heard of the misery it presented; and, detained at a meeting till past midnight, I went with one of my elders, who was a Commissioner of Police, to visit the scene. In a room, the walls of which were thickly hung with bunches of skeleton keys, the dark lanterns of the thief, and other instruments of housebreaking, sat the lieutenant of the watch. Seeing me at that untimely hour, handed in by one of the Commissioners, he looked surprise itself. Having satisfied him that there was no misdemeanour, we proceeded, under the charge of an intelligent officer, to visit the wards.

Our purpose is not to describe the strangest, saddest collection of human misery I ever saw, but to observe that not a few children, having no home on earth, had sought and found there a shelter for the night. "They had not where to lay their head."

Turned adrift in the morning, and subsisting as they best could during the day, this wreck of society, like the wrack of the sea-shore, came drifting in again at evening tide. After visiting a number of wards and cells, I remember looking down from the gallery on an open space, where five or six human beings lay on the bare pavement buried in slumber; and right opposite the stove, with its ruddy light shining full on his face, lay a poor child, who attracted my special attention. He was miserably clad; he seemed about eight years old; he had the sweetest face I ever saw; his bed was the hard stone pavement,—his pillow a brick; and, as he lay calm in sleep, forgetful of all his sorrows, he looked a picture of injured innocence. His story, which I learned from the officer, was a sad one; but one such as too many could tell. He had neither father nor mother, brother nor friend, in the wide world. His only friends were the Police,—his only home their office. How he lived they did not know; but, sent away in the morning, he usually returned at night. The floor of a ward, the stone by the stove, was a better bed than a stair-foot. I could not get that boy out of my head or heart for days and nights together. I have often regretted that some effort was not made to save him. Some six or seven years are by

and gone since then; and before now, launched on the sea of human passion, and exposed to a thousand temptations, he has too probably become a melancholy wreck. What else could any man who believes in the depravity of human nature, and knows the danger of the world, expect him to become? These children, whom we leave in ignorance, and starve into crime, must grow up into criminals, —the pest, the shame, the burden, the punishment of society; and in the increasing expenses of public charities, work-houses, poor-rates, prisons, police-officers, and superior officers of justice, what do we see, but the judgments of a righteous God, and hear, but the echo of these solemn words, "Be sure your sin will find you out?"

From statistics before me, I repeat it again,—and it ought to be repeated till a remedy be provided,—that there are at least a thousand children in this city (others say some thousands, but I would rather under-state than in the least exaggerate the case) who cannot receive such an education as will bless them, and make them a blessing, unless, along with the means of education, they are provided with the means of keeping body and soul together. Let the Christian public observe, that while such schools as Lady Effingham's, Lady Anderson's, and the

Duchess of Gordon's, and others of the same description, are most creditable to the large-hearted benevolence of these ornaments of the upper and best friends of the lower classes, and are the means of incalculable good to a low class, yet they hardly touch that *lowest* class for whose interests I have stepped forth from my own peculiar walk, and now venture, through the press, on this appeal. The fact may be doubted by some who have never left their drawing-rooms to visit, like angels of mercy, the abodes of misery and crime; but no visitor of the Destitute Sick Society,—no humble and hard-working city missionary,—no enlightened governor of our prisons,—no superintendent of Night Asylum or House of Refuge,—none who, like myself, has been called on to explore, amid fever and famine, the depths of human misery in this city, and has come in close, and painful, and heart-sickening contact with its crimes and poverty,—I say, none of these will doubt it,—at least I have met with none who doubted it. I implore the public to remember, that we have not here the miserable consolation that the infected will die off. They are mixed with society,—each an active centre of corruption. Around them you can draw no *Cordon Sanitaire*. The leaven is every day leavening more and more

of the lump. Parents are begetting and breeding up children in their own image ; while ignorance, and vice, and crime, are shooting ahead even of the increase of that population.

I have long felt inclined to add my experience to that of many benevolent and Christian men who have gone before me, regarding the deplorable and dangerous state of the class who form the substratum of society, the miserable provision made even for decent poverty,—for those whom the hand of God has smitten,—and the manifold temptations the poor are thereby exposed to. But the pressure of other avocations, the difficulty of getting the public ear in times of excitement, and the lack of any approved remedy for the evil in its first causes, must explain my silence in the past.

We had been for some time inclined to hold that such a remedy was only to be found in such schools as we now propose ; but till the experience of Aberdeen and of Dundee had turned what was but a presumption into a fact, we had not courage to venture on the proposal. We see no way of securing the amelioration and salvation of these forlorn, outcast, and destitute children, but by making their maintenance a bridge and stepping-stone to their education. It has been tried and proved, that with-

out some such instrumentality you cannot get these children to school; at least you cannot get more than the smallest per-centage of them; and though you could,—though you got the hungry shivering creature into your class,—what heart has he for learning, whose pale face and hollow eyes tell you he is starving? What teacher could have the heart to punish a child who has not broken his fast that day? What man of sense would mock with books a boy who is starving for bread? Let Christian men answer our Lord's question; let every parent think of it:—"What father, if his child ask for bread, would give him a stone?" And what is English grammar, or the Rule of Three, or the A, B, C, to a hungry child but a stone?

I have often met this difficulty in dealing with the grown up, who possessed what the child does not,—sense to understand the importance of the lesson. I have seen it in a way not to be forgotten. In the depth of a hard winter, when, visiting in the Cowgate, I entered a room, where, save a broken table, there was nought of furniture but a crazy bedstead, on which, beneath a thin ragged coverlet, lay a very old, grey-headed woman. I began to speak to her, as to one near eternity, about her soul; on which, raising herself up, and stretching out a

bare withered arm, she cried most piteously, "I am cauld and hungry." "My poor old friend," I said, "we will do what we can to relieve these wants; but let me in kindness remind you that there is something worse than either cold or hunger." "Aye, but, Sir," was the reply, "if ye were as cauld and as hungry as I am, ye could think o' naething else." She read me a lesson that day which I have never forgotten; and which, as the advocate of these poor forlorn children, I ask a humane and Christian public to apply to their case. The public may plant schools thick as trees of the forest; but be assured, unless, besides being trees of knowledge,—to borrow a figure from the isles of the Pacific,—they are also *bread-fruit trees*, few of these children will seek their shadow, far less sit under it with great delight.

Is any one so ignorant of human nature as to suppose that, offered nothing but learning, these destitute children may be brought to school by the mere power of moral suasion? I would like to know how many of the well-fed, well-clothed, well-disciplined children, who crowd our schools, would prefer the school-room to the play-ground, unless their parents compelled their attendance. It may be answered, try the power of moral suasion on the

parents. Now, we put it to any reasonable man, if it be not true, that to expect an abandoned drunken ruffian,—a miserable, ignorant, poverty-struck widow, whose powers, both of body and mind, grief and want have paralyzed,—those who themselves are strangers to the benefits of education,—who are living without God and without hope in the world,—who are partly dependent for their own stinted subsistence, and, in too many instances, the feeding of their vices, on the fruits of their children's plunder or begging,—we ask, if to expect that such will compel their children to attend school, is not seeking for grapes on thorns, or figs on thistles?

We have already indicated how we propose to meet these difficulties: let us be a little more explicit. What we then propose to do, with the intent of meeting, and the confidence of overcoming, difficulties never yet fairly grappled with, and, with God's blessing, of engrafting on the fair stock of civilization and Christianity these wild vines, so that they shall yield the wine which is pleasant both to God and man, is this: in place of one great institution, which would be attended by many disadvantages, let there be an adequate number of schools set down in the different districts of the city, so that each school shall contain no more than a manageable number of

children,—not more than a teacher can thoroughly control and break in. These Arabs of the city are wild as those of the desert, and must be broken into three habits,—those of discipline, learning, and industry, not to speak of cleanliness. To accomplish this, our trust is in the almost omnipotent power of Christian kindness. Hard words and harder blows are thrown away here. With these, alas! they are too familiar at home, and have learned to be as indifferent to them as the smith's dog to the shower of sparks. And without entering into many details, it may be enough to say, that in the morning they are to break their fast on a diet of the plainest fare,—then march from their meal to their books; in the afternoon they are again to be provided with a dinner of the cheapest kind,—then back again to school; from which, after supper, they return, not to the walls of an hospital, but to their own homes. There, carrying with them many a holy lesson, they may prove Christian missionaries to these dwellings of darkness and sin. This is no vain expectation. Our confidence is in Him who has said, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings He ordaineth strength." And we are all the more confident of his blessing, because we are in this the best way fulfilling the duty laid on us in his promise to the forlorn,

—"When thy father and thy mother forsake thee, then the Lord will take thee up." A faithful God, He does not this by way of miracle, but by way of means; putting it into the hearts of kind and Christian people to do a father's and a mother's part to those who are fatherless and motherless, or to those still more unhappy children who have parents, but would be better without them.

To work this scheme to its greatest advantage and capability of good, we would strongly recommend the adoption of some such plan as this. In place of benevolent individuals contenting themselves with subscribing to its funds, and taking no further interest in the welfare of its objects, let each select one child or more, as his means may warrant, —say one child. The expenses of its education and maintenance at school are met by him: this is known to the child; and thus, taught to regard him as its benefactor, the better and kindlier feelings of its nature are brought into activity, and nurtured into strength. Within the arms of his gratitude man can embrace a benevolent individual, but not a benevolent community. What pauper ever left a charity workhouse with a blessing on its Directors? But individual charity has been remembered in the widow's prayer; and some have walked our streets

who could say with the patriarch, "When the eye saw me, then it blessed me." We attach the utmost importance to this plan. By means of it, the person through whose kindness the child is placed and paid for at school,—who comes there occasionally to watch the progress of a plant which he had found flung on the highway, to be trodden under foot, but which he has transplanted into this nursery of good,—becomes an object of kindly regard to the child. The boy fears his displeasure, and aims at his approbation. Kindness softens the child's heart; his love and gratitude are kindled; and so we call in the most effectual allies in our effort to save him from ruin. In this way, moreover, the child has secured a patron and protector, —one to take him by the hand when his term at school is closed, and to stand by him in the battle of life. Selecting a boy in whom we have learned to take a kindly interest, we will feel it to be our business to guide him, by our counsel and influence, into some way of well-doing. We will charge ourselves with his welfare. He will not have to complain,—"No man careth for my soul." And thus through the influence of kindly feelings on his part, and Christian care on ours, in many a now unhappy child society might gain a useful member, instead

of receiving an Ishmaelite, "whose hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him."

On the management of these schools we have only to add, that alongside a common and Christian education, we will introduce such work as may suit the age of the children, and their condition in life, with the double advantage of lessening, by its profits, the expense of maintenance, and forming in the children habits of industry, which will fit them for an honest and useful life. And thus, through these schools, heaven smiling upon them, we will be able to address these children in the language of God to the patriarch,—"I will bless thee, and make thee a blessing."

We know no solid objection to which our scheme is open. Not that we mean to say it will prove a good without any mixture of evil, or that it cannot by any possibility be abused; but only that, if these are objections, they are objections to which the best and noblest schemes of Christian benevolence are exposed. However, our extreme anxiety for the success of this scheme leads us to address ourselves to some objections that may be conjured up against it.

Now, we beg, in the first place, to observe, that this is no scheme to relieve those whose vices have

brought them to ruin, or whose indolence keeps them in poverty. We fully accord with this sentiment of the apostle, "He that will not work should not eat." This is both the judgment of Scripture and of reason. In very mercy to this world, God has linked crime and suffering together; and it is a short-sighted benevolence which, interfering with that law of Providence, attempts to dissolve the connection. Let guilty parents suffer. They have eaten sour grapes, —let their teeth be set on edge. But has not God said, "What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel." And the question which we put to a humane and Christian public is this:—Are we, without any efficient effort to save their innocent and helpless offspring, to allow these guilty parents to draw them down into the same gulf with themselves? We do not propose to contaminate our hospitals with such children. Surely it would be one thing to rear the children of the wicked in affluence,—to provide them with a finished education—to house them in splendid palaces; and another thing to save them from the pangs of

hunger, and from the crimes to which hunger tempts and drives them; to bless them with a simple education, by which they might live decently in this world, and be taught the way to a better. Let me put a case! In the College Wynd of the old Greyfriars' parish, I found a mother, with some three young children by her side, and a pale sickly infant in her arms. She was a drunkard. But there was no bed there save some straw; there was no fire save some smouldering cinders; there was not a morsel of bread in the house. I learnt this from being constantly interrupted, while speaking to her, by the miserable object in her arms incessantly saying something to its mother. On asking what it said, she burst into tears, and told me it was asking for bread, and she had none to give it. They had not broken their fast that day; and it was now past noon. Fresh from a happy country parish, I was horrified at such a scene; and sent out for a loaf. They fell on it like ravenous beasts. Now, the question I ask, and to which I crave an answer, is this:—Should I have left these children to die of hunger, because their mother was a drunkard? If not,—if what I did was rather to be commended than condemned,—how ought this scheme to commend itself to the zealous support of Christian men?

That food, perhaps, served to spin out for but a little while their feeble thread of life: it secured to them no permanent benefit. But let the public observe, that the charity given in the way we plead for does what common charity does not;—it secures for every child whose hunger it allays, and whose life it saves, the blessings of a common and a Christian education.

We can fancy some people being at first sight alarmed at our scheme, as one which will entail additional burdens on the public. Grant that it did:—the benefit would more than compensate for the burden. "There is he that scattereth and yet increaseth;" and,—never were the words more applicable,—"there is he that withholdeth the hand, and it tendeth to poverty." But it is not thus that we meet the objection. We meet it fairly in the face. We deny that any additional burden worth mentioning will press on the public. Do you fancy that, by rejecting this appeal, and refusing to establish these schools, you, the public, will be saved the expense of maintaining these outcasts? A great and demonstrable mistake. They live just now; and how do they live? Not by their own honest industry, but at your expense. They beg and steal for themselves; or their parents beg and steal for

them. You are not relieved of the expense of their sustenance by refusing my plea. The Old Man of the sea sticks to the back of Sinbad. Surely it were better for Sinbad to teach the old man to walk on his own feet. I pray the public to remember, that begging and stealing, while in most cases poor trades to those who pursue them, are dear ones to the public. A friend just now tells me of an old beggar, accomplished in his vocation, who used to lament over the degeneracy of the age, saying, that "men now-a-days didna ken how to beg; that Kelso *weel* beggit was worth fifteen shillings ony day." These beggars that you are breeding on the body politic are costly as well as troublesome members of society. Catch yon little fellow, with his pale face and piteous whine, and search, as some of us have done, his wallets. You will be astonished at the stores of beef and bread concealed beneath his rags. Don't blame him, however, because he whines on;—he must reach his den at night, laden like a bee with plunder. You forget that a sound beating may await him if he returns empty-handed; for he has to keep his mother in whisky, as well as his brothers and sisters in food. You have often tried to put down public begging, the dearest and most vicious way of maintaining the poor; but till

some such plan as ours is adopted, you never can. Not to speak of the beggars that prowl about our streets, hundreds of children set out every morning to levy their subsistence for the day, by calls at private houses. They beg when they may: they steal when they can. Is not such a system a disgrace to society? Its evils are legion: and I can fancy no plan that goes so directly, and with such sure promise of success, to the root of these evils, as that I advocate. We say with Daniel Defoe, that begging is a shame to any country: if the beggar is an unworthy object of charity, it is a shame that he should be *allowed* to beg; if a worthy object of charity, it is a shame that he should be *compelled* to beg.

We can again fancy some filled with fear lest such institutions should prove "a bounty on indolence, improvidence, and dissipation." We might answer, that the same objection may be urged against all charity; and that unless we are prepared to run some risk, we shall never either obey the command of God to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, or yield to the better feelings of our nature. But let us look more directly at this objection. We are ready to meet it. Grant that the scheme were to act so in some cases on the parents; still the good

more than counterbalances the evil. You are employing the only means whereby the children can be saved from habits of "indolence, improvidence, and dissipation." Suppose a man already indolent, improvident, and dissipated, to have four children; without this institution, these grow up in their father's image. And what happens? Let the public observe what happens. The evil is multiplied fourfold. These four, again, become in course of time heads of families,—say, each the parent of four children. And what happens now? The evil by this time is multiplied sixteenfold; and so it rolls on and deepens, like the waters of the prophet's vision; first reaching the ankle; then rising to the knee; then to the loins; and by and by "it is a river that cannot be passed over—waters to swim in." How easily and successfully the child is trained to the vices of the man, we have had abundant evidence. We have heard a little child of eight years of age confess that he had been carried home intoxicated; and when he gaily and glibly told this story of early dissipation, it only called forth the merriment of the ragged urchins around. The sucking babe is drugged with opium; and spirits are administered to allay the cravings of hunger. When examined on the state of her school, an excellent

female teacher in this town acknowledged to us, that she had often been obliged from her own small salary to supply the wants of her hungry scholars. She had not the heart to offer the letters to a child who had got no breakfast; and some days ago, smelling spirits from a fine little girl, she drew from her this miserable confession, that her only dinner had been the half of a biscuit and a little whisky. How early this hapless class are initiated in the use of spirits, came out the other day, to the astonishment of a friend of ours. While walking along the streets, she observed some boys and girls clustered like bees on and around a barrel. She asked them if it was a sugar barrel; and on learning that it was a spirit one, she said, "You surely don't like whisky?" "For my pairt, Mem," says one, a little girl,—thinking, perhaps, thereby to recommend herself,—"'deed, Mem, for my pairt, I prefer the strong ale." In sober sadness we ask, is it not worth running some risk to cure such evils,—such a moral gangrene,—as facts like these disclose? But grant, again, that the dissipated father, because he sees his poor children fed, educated, and disciplined at your expense, and not his own, is thereby encouraged in habits of vice. What happens? If his children are saved by this institution,—and, remember, they cannot be saved

without it,—at his death society suffers no longer. The evil ceases with himself; and, instead of extending along the line of his posterity, and multiplying with their multiplication, it is buried in the drunkard's grave.

That any decent, sober, church-going, affectionate father, who is at present educating and honestly maintaining his family, will cease to work and take to drinking, because he will get the children whom he loves, and for whom he loves to labour, educated and fed in such a school as we suggest, along with the sweepings of the neighbourhood, is an idea too absurd to be entertained by any reasonable man. It were waste of time, paper, and public patience, to answer an objection so utterly repugnant to human nature, and contrary to all experience.

But I am not content simply to repel the objection, and show that such an institution will prove no bounty on indolence, improvidence, and dissipation. I believe the truth lies altogether the other way; and having had more to do than many with the victims of these vices, I may be permitted to express my thorough conviction, that the uncared-for and desperate circumstances of the poor often prove strong temptations to the waste that leads to want. They are helpless because they are hopeless. It is

after they get desperate that they get dissipated. Man thirsts for happiness; and when everything in his neglected, and unpitied, and unhelped sorrows is calculated to make him miserable, he seeks visions of bliss in the day-dreams of intoxication; and from the horrors that follow on excess he flies again to the arms of the enchanter. The intoxicating cup brings,—what he never has without it,—though a passing, still a present feeling of joy and comfort. Of course, I here speak of one who is a stranger to the consolations of religion, and the faith of Him who said, "Though the fig-tree should not blossom, and there be no fruit in the vine, I will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation." It is easy for those who walk through the world rolled in flannels and cased in good broad cloth,—who sit down every day to a sumptuous, at least a comfortable dinner,—who have never had to sing a hungry child to sleep, nor to pawn their Bible to buy bread, —it is very easy for such to wonder why the poor, who should be so careful, are often so wasteful. "What have they to do with drink?" it is said; "what temptation have they to drink?" I pray them,—not that I defend the thing, but detest it,— but I pray them to hear the testimony of one who

knew human nature well. The Laird* and Maggie are haggling about a fish bargain.

"'I'll gie them,' says Maggie, 'and—and—and —half-a-dozen o' partans to mak' the sauce, for three shillings and a dram.'

"'Half-a-crown then, Maggie, and a dram,' replies the Laird.

"'Aweel, your honour maun hae't your ain gate, nae doubt; but a dram's worth siller now,—the distilleries is no working.'

"'And I hope they'll never work again in my time,' said Oldbuck.

"'Ay, ay, it's easy for your honour, and the like o' you gentle folks, to say sae, that hae stouth and routh, and fire and fending, and meat and claith, and sit dry and canny by the fire-side; but an' ye wanted fire, and meat, and dry claise, and were deeing o' cauld, and had a sair heart,—whilk is warst ava,—wi' just tippence in your pouch,—wadna ye be glad to buy a dram wi't, to be eilding and claise, and a supper and heart's ease into the bargain, till the morn's morning?'"

There is a world of melancholy truth in this description.

I quote the above as the testimony of a man

* Antiquary.

who had studied human nature: and I now quote what follows, as the inspired words of one whose Proverbs contain the most remarkable record of practical observation and every-day wisdom that the world contains. What says Solomon? "The destruction of the poor is their poverty." He saw the connection between desperate circumstances and dissipated habits; and elsewhere he says, "Let him drink to forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more." The truth is, that a poor widow, with a babe at her breast, with three children at her side, and with only a sixpence a week allowed for each, to meet therewith the cost of food, fuel, house-rent, clothes, and education, is often driven to desperation. She struggles on for a while; and, turning into temporary floats, by the help of the pawnbroker, this article and that, with her children hanging on her, she keeps her head awhile to the stream. At length, having taken her last decent bit of furniture or dress to the pawn, she can contest it no longer. She loses heart. Seeing no hope, she seeks to drown in drink the consciousness of her misery, and is borne down the flood of ruin. If you cannot understand this temptation, I will help you to do so. Look at that door, where an officer stands with a sword in one hand, and a finger of the other on the trigger

of a pistol! Who and what are these desperate and haggard men that press in upon him? A band of pirates who have boarded his ship? Does he stand there to guard its freight of gold? No, he guards its spirit-room. Six days ago, the sea was calm,—hope was bright as heaven,—the good ship bounded over the billows,—and not a man of that band but he had only to say to him, "Go, and he goeth." But the storm came, and the sails flew into ribbons, and the masts went by the board, and the seams gaped to the sea, and the pumps were choked, and the vessel now lies water-logged. The men have strained their eyes for a sail on the wide round of waters, and have ceased to hope. The cry has been raised, "To the spirit-room!" and by this time they had drowned their sorrows in intoxication, but that that calm, determined man stands there, and having drawn a chalk line across the passage, assures them he will cut down the first that attempts to cross.

Far be it from me to say a word in defence of a crime which is the curse of our people, the shame of our country, and the blot of our Churches. But don't deceive yourselves; you will never starve men into sobriety. No; but you can starve many into drunkenness. One demon never cast out another;

although some seem to know as little of human nature as did the Jews of old, when they blasphemously said of our Divine Redeemer, "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils." I have seen and admired the efforts which the poor put forth when a ray of hope breaks through the gloom; and, instead of aggravating the evils of dissipation, I am confident that the hope which such an institution would shed on the gloomy prospects of many a forlorn family, would help to charm and chase the demon away. It would make the widow's heart sing for joy. It would keep up her sinking head,—to see that now her poor, dear children had the prospect of being saved. It would have the same effect on her as the cry of "A sail!" has had on the mutinous crew, when, in that blessed sight and blessed sound, Hope boards the sinking ship. They return once more to their right mind, and now strain every nerve to keep themselves afloat.

It cannot be denied that at this moment many of our poor are miserably provided for: and, let me ask, how could an addition be so well or wisely made to their wretched pittance, as by securing for their children such an education, as with the blessing of God, would train them up into honest and

useful members of society? The present system is vicious and defective. If the State or society is bound to maintain the children of the destitute, it is bound to do, what it does not,—educate them also. It pretends to do the first,—to a large extent it does not even pretend to do the second. By our scheme both would be done. If parents and others are inclined to abuse our charity, and make it minister to their own vices, instead of their children's maintenance, this scheme goes like a knife to the root of that evil. The children,—the innocent sufferers,—those who, in the case of dissipated parents, become all the more objects of Christian pity, —are, in the institutions we plead for, made sure of food, knowledge, habits of discipline and industry; in short, they are placed beyond the reach of their parents' rapacity. The principle of our scheme lies here: we feed in order to educate; just because we believe that if you seek the good of the individual child, the benefit of society, and the glory of God, it is better to pay for the education of the boy, than for the punishment of the man.

We never could clearly see our way to the justice which punishes the child, in cases when it may be truly said, that he has less sinned than been sinned against. We are confident that the sentence

which condemns is often wrung from reluctant judges. I cannot transfer to paper the touching description of a trial I heard from my friend Mr. Lothian, Procurator-Fiscal for the county of Edinburgh. On the occasion I allude to, he was the advocate of a boy who was charged with theft. The prisoner was a mere child. When he stood up, the crown of his head just reached the top of the bar. The crime was clearly proved; and now came Mr. Lothian's time to shield him from the arm of the law. By the evidence of two or three policemen, he proved that that untaught, unschooled, untrained, uncared-for infant, had a parent, by whose brutal cruel usage he was compelled to steal. Then, causing the poor child to be lifted up, and placed upon the bar, in the sight of the wondering, pitying court, he turned round to the jury-box with this simple but telling appeal:—"Gentlemen," he said, "remember what I have proved; look on that infant, and declare him guilty if you can."

In such cases justice is perplexed what to do. It is not the heart only, but the head also, which is dissatisfied with the punishment. It is not on Mercy, but on Justice, that we call to interpose her shield, and protect the victim from the arm of the law. The guilty party is not at the bar; and when

the arm of Justice descends on a child whom its country has neglected, abandoned to temptation, and left without protection from a parent's cruelty, she reminds us of the figure that stood some years ago over the courts of law in Londonderry. A heavy storm had swept across the country, and, tearing away the scales, had left poor Justice nothing but her sword. The law in such cases may pronounce its sentence; but humanity, reason, and religion, revolt against it. In Scotland, if a man is charged with crime, the jury, in the case of his acquittal, may return either a verdict of *not guilty*, or *not proven*. Where there is strong ground to suspect the party guilty, yet some slight flaw in the legal proof of his guilt,—the prisoner is acquitted under a verdict of not proven; and if there are cases where the verdict is in truth, "*guilty, but not proven*," —in the case of these unhappy children who are suffering for the crimes of their parents and neglect of society, with what truth might this verdict be returned, "*proven, but not guilty!*"

No offence can be committed but there is guilt somewhere. In the cases I refer to, however, the guilty party is not the child at the bar. In the parents who have trained the child to crime, and in society, that has made no effective effort to save

him, there are other two parties. It may not be easy for us to decide where the guilt lies, or in what proportion it is shared between them; but we are thoroughly persuaded, that in the day of final judgment there will be found many an unhappy child who has stood at the bar of man, for whose crimes other parties shall have to answer at the bar of God. We don't say that society can remedy every wrong; nor do we entertain the Utopian expectation that, by these schools, or by any other means, crime can be banished from this guilty world; but certainly institutions which will secure to these children a common and Christian education, and habits of discipline and industry, are rich in promise. We know that the returns of autumn fall always short of the promise of summer,—that the fruit is never so abundant as the flower; still, though not so Utopian as to expect that these schools will save all, we have good ground, both in reason and Scripture, to expect that they will save many who seem otherwise doomed to ruin.

To take the lowest of all ground,—to descend from the high considerations of humanity, morality, and religion, look only at the pecuniary saving. To come down from the profit and loss of souls, to the profit and the loss of money,—we claim for this

scheme the public support. It may be laid down as an axiom, that the prevention of crime is cheaper than its punishment. Our schools will more than repay the outlay. Put out of view the return which their work brings in, and which in Aberdeen amounts to a considerable item of the expense, and enter on the one side the expense of these schools, and on the other the saving to the country, through the diminution of crime, and, when the account is closed, we have a large balance in our favour. We pray those who are afraid of the probable expense of our Ragged Schools, to look at the actual expense of our criminal prosecutions. To confine ourselves to the case of convicts;—does the reader know that there are about three hundred of these annually transported from Scotland? Do the inhabitants of Edinburgh know that our city furnishes about one hundred of these? And that, overlooking the expense of previous convictions, and the money which the subjects of them cost when living by theft and beggary, the actual expense of their conviction of the offence for which they are transported, and of the transportation itself, is not less than One Hundred Pounds a head! For convicts belonging to this city we pay Ten Thousand Pounds a year; and for the single item of the trial and transportation of

convicts,—who are, after all, but a handful of the other criminals, Scotland pays annually about Thirty Thousand Pounds. Look at the following table, which Mr. Smith, governor of the prison, has kindly furnished. If sensible men only knew what enormous sums are paid for the punishment of crimes, they would, as a matter of mere economy, hail with pleasure a scheme so likely to prevent it. This table will convince many, that in doing so little towards the education and salvation of the unhappy outcasts at our doors, we have been for a long time, to use a vulgar but expressive saying, "penny wise and pound foolish."

Statement of the Expenditure for Criminal Prosecutions, Maintenance of Criminals, &c., for Scotland, for the year 1846.

Expense of Prosecutions carried on in name and by authority of the Lord Advocate	£13,775
Sums required by the Sheriffs in Scotland to settle accounts for prosecutions	49,000
Expenditure under the Prison Boards of the several counties in Scotland, for maintenance, &c., of prisoners	43,366
Proportion effeiring to Scotland for convicts sent to Millbank	3,932
Carry forward .	£110,073

Brought forward .	£110,073
Proportion effeiring to Scotland for convicts sent abroad	28,830
Proportion effeiring to Scotland for convicts at home, Bermuda, Gibraltar, &c. . . .	7,193
Expense of Prison Board in Scotland . .	1,740
Prison Inspector's allowances, including travelling charges	1,200
Justiciary Court and Crown agent for stationery, printing, &c.	1,009
	£150,045

In addition to the above, vast expenses are incurred in the punishment of crime, the amount of which we cannot specify, such as,—Expense of Court of Justiciary, including judges' salaries, travelling expenses on circuits, macers, &c.; salaries of the Lord Advocate, Solicitor-General, and Depute-Advocates; Crown agent's salary, including assistants, &c.

The following should also be included:—Expenditure by the several counties, cities, and burghs in Scotland, in supporting their respective police establishments; expenditure by ditto in precognitions and summary prosecutions in criminal cases, not reported by the Sheriff to the Lord Advocate; one year's interest on capital expended in building prisons, lock-up houses, &c.

Some one has said, "How cheap is charity!" This beautiful saying might form the motto of our Industrial Schools. No man, we think, can read this table of expense without the conviction being borne in on his mind, that it is high time to be doing more in the way of preventing, that we may have to do less in the way of punishing, crime.

Nothing more strongly recommends the scheme to me than the fact, that it reconciles two great and good philanthropists, who seem to be opposed to each other,—both lovers of the poor, both earnest for their good,—both proposing for the same end what appear different plans,—and yet both right. With Dr. Chalmers we have always thought that it was through moral and Christian machinery that our degraded and deep-sunk population were to be raised. For their permanent good we have no faith in any other scheme. With Dr. Alison, again, we always thought that the maintenance of the poor was miserably inadequate to their wants; and that this stood as a barrier between them and the moral influences by which Dr. Chalmers would ameliorate and permanently improve their character. We agreed with both, and confess that we could never very well see how they seemed to disagree with each other. In, as it were, the presence of such men, I speak on

this subject with unfeigned humility. The two schemes may go hand in hand. Nay, more, like the Siamese twins, the presence of the one should insure the company of the other. Our scheme furnishes a common walk for both these distinguished philanthropists. Under the self-same roof the temporal and the moral wants of our forlorn poor are provided for: and both these Doctors meet harmoniously in our school-room. Dr. Alison comes in with his bread,—Dr. Chalmers with his Bible: here is food for the body,—there for the soul. Dr. Alison's bread cannot be abused,—Dr. Chalmer's Bible is heard by willing ears; and so this scheme, meeting the views of both, lays its hands upon them both.

We have been dealing with objectors and objections, if any such there be. If any man into whose hands this appeal may fall is ready to toss it aside as an effort made on behalf of those who are not worth saving, either for this world or the next, let him read the following passage:—

"'Push it aside, and let it float down the stream,' said the captain of a steam-boat on a small western river, as we came upon a huge log lying crosswise in the channel, near to a large town at which we were about to stop. The headway of the boat had already been checked, and with a trifling effort the

position of the log was changed, and it moved onward toward the Mississippi. On it went, perhaps to annoy others, as it had annoyed us,—to lodge here and there, until it becomes so water-soaken, that the heavier end will sink into a sand-bar, and the lighter project upward, thus forming a 'sawyer,' or a 'snag.' It would have taken a little more effort to cast it high upon the land; but no one on board appeared to think of doing that, or anything else, save getting rid of it as easily as possible, for it had not yet become a *formidable evil.* By and by, if a steam-boat should be going down the river, and strike against it, causing a loss of thousands of dollars, if not of life, hundreds will ask the old question, if something cannot be done to *remedy* such evils, without stopping to inquire whether they cannot be prevented.

"Now, this is the way in which some of us work, who profess to have a better knowledge than that which belongs to the world. We forget that old proverb, that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure,—that that is the truest wisdom which advises the overcoming of the beginnings of evil. It may cost *us* less seeming labour to 'push aside' the boy who stands at the corner of the street on the Sabbath, with an oath on his lips, than to put

forth a little extra effort to get him into a Sabbath-school. But he is not yet a *formidable evil* to society, and so is left to float down with the current of vice,—to continue his growth in sin, and reach his manhood steeped in habits of evil, and fixed in a position that may work the ruin of more than one soul."

Yes, it is easy to push aside the poor boy in the street, with a harsh and unfeeling refusal, saying to your neighbour, "These are the pests of the city." Call them, if you choose, the rubbish of society; only let us say, that there are jewels among that rubbish, which would richly repay the expense of searching. Bedded in their dark and dismal abodes, precious stones lie there, which only wait to be dug out and polished, to shine, first on earth, and hereafter and for ever in a Redeemer's crown.

Dr. Chalmers has eloquently expounded, and often practically exemplified, the principle, that when convinced ourselves, we ought to begin at once; nor delay action till all are ready to move. And in drawing these remarks to a close, we have to mention, that, acting on this principle, an Interim Committee of gentlemen have secured premises, and taken steps for the speedy opening of a Ragged School in this city. We cast ourselves with perfect

faith on God, and the support of a humane and Christian public. We hope to see the matter taken up on a large and general plan, worthy of its merits and worthy of the metropolis of Scotland. In the meantime, we are content to be the mere pioneers of this movement; and for such a noble experiment we trust to be provided with funds amply sufficient for the expenses we incur. For such assistance we can promise a richer return than our thanks,—even the blessing of those that are ready to perish.

In closing this appeal, I have only further to add, that we are all but confident of public support. We have brought forth revelations of the state of the poor, which will be new to many. If any of these read this appeal, their ignorance cannot henceforth excuse their apathy. Such schools, in smaller or greater numbers, are needed in many towns. We hope to see Christians of all denominations, and politicians of all parties, throughout the country as well as in Edinburgh, putting forth cordial and combined efforts to establish and extend Ragged Schools. Though, for the sake of the perishing, we may regret the defects and inadequacy of this appeal, we will never regret that it has been made. It were better far in such a cause to fail, than to stand idly by and see the castaway perish. If the

drowning man sinks before we reach him, it will be some consolation to reflect that we did our best to save him. Though we bore home but the dead body of her boy, we should earn a mother's gratitude and blessing. We had tried to save him: and from that blessed One who made Himself poor that He might make us rich,—who was full of compassion, kind and patient to the bad,—and who hath set us an example that we should follow His steps, —we shall at least earn this approving sentence, "They have done what they could."

SECOND PLEA.

"They perish in the open streets,—beneath the pitiless pelting of the storm,—of cold, and hunger, and broken hearts."

BISHOP HORSLEY.

DURING the noontide heat of an African sun, the missionary sat with his family in the shadow of their waggon. A widely-spread solitude extended far away and all around them. The sun glowed from a cloudless sky on the scorching sand; the lion lay panting in his shady den; the wild beasts had sought, some the cooling river, some the depths of the dark forest; and all around the travellers there was neither sound, nor sight of life. Nature lay exhausted; and had dropped asleep, like an infant in the heat of day. An object moving in the distance, and approaching his encampment, at length attracted the eye of the missionary. By and by a

boy stood before him, in the grace of savage freedom, scantily attired in the skin of a wild beast, which hung from his bronzed and naked shoulders. He was accompanied by a beautiful springbok, which licked his hand, and trotted lovingly at his heels. The child of parents who had died or deserted him, without brother or sister, kindred, clan, or companion, save the gentle deer,—he told his story in a single sentence. Fixing his large black eyes on the man of God, he stretched out his naked arm, and said, "Stranger, I am alone in the world." The appeal was touching, tender, irresistible. Let us hope it will prove as successful with kind hearts at home.

The solitude of a crowd is the most painful of all. We have sat on the shore of a lonely bay, shut out from the green earth by its gigantic walls, with nought but the blue sea before us, and the blue sky above us; on the sands no print of human foot, nor white sail on the waters. At the close of day we have stood in a lone Highland glen, where the mountains, crowned by frowning crags, rose to heaven, and the lake, undisturbed by a ripple, lay asleep at their feet,—shining in the last gleam of twilight, like molten silver at the bottom of a coal-black crucible. In such scenes we have felt much

alone; but never so much so as, in early youth, on descending from a coach on a winter evening, in the heart of London, where, amid the glare of lights, and the roar of business, and hurrying crowds, we knew no one. The Solitary of a City is a lonesome being; and such, in the most bitter circumstances, are many on behalf of whom I venture once more to address a humane and Christian public.

The appeal which we are now about to make is chiefly addressed to those who have as yet lent nothing to the Ragged Schools. We employ the word *lent* designedly and deliberately. It has not slid in by a slip of the pen, but is used in virtue of the Divine enunciation, "He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and He will repay." On that security we would borrow your money, while reminding you of these other words of Divine benevolence, "Hide not thyself from thine own flesh;" "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." The money which is lavished on sturdy beggars, on the wasteful slaves of vice, on the reckless and improvident, you have no right to expect repayment of. These are not the poor. On the contrary, they plunder the poor, and prey on poverty; and hardening men's hearts by their frauds, improvidence,

crimes, and detected impostures, against the claims of real poverty, they deserve not charity, but chastisement. It is a scandal and a shame that such devouring locusts are permitted to infest our city, and swarm in its streets. The vices of a system which the police strangely tolerate, and our charity unwisely maintains, are visible in the blotched and brazened features of those thriving solicitors. The very breath with which they whine for charity smells of the dram-shop. It poisons and pollutes the air; and those who contribute to foster this profligate system have no claim to the blessing,

> "Blessed is he that wisely doth
> The poor man's case consider."

If our Ragged Schools should be under the painful necessity of drawing in their expenditure, and of contracting, instead of extending the sphere of their operations, it will be lamentable. With thousands yearly wasted on the maintenance of a horde of plunderers, the condition of the body politic shall be as unhealthy as is that of the body corporeal, when its blood and juices go to nourish an enormous wen, which exhausts the strength, creates deformity, and swells at the expense of shrunken and wasted limbs.

Should this plea fall into the hands of any whose first impulse is to fling it aside, with such a growl as that wherewith some fat and well-fed mastiff salutes the timid, lank, hungry, houseless cur, who presumes to approach his well-heaped trencher, we beseech their patience. As confident in the goodness as we are earnest for the success of our cause, with the brave old Roman, we say, "Strike, but hear me!"

There are schemes of benevolence which labour under a serious disadvantage. The objects they seek to benefit, and the benefits they succeed in bestowing on them, are out of sight; remote, and far away. The Christianizing of the heathen, and emancipation of the slave, achieved amid foreign scenes, and on fields from which we are separated by thousands of miles, are objects to us, not of sight, but of faith. We neither saw the negro writhing under the lash, nor, when his chains were struck off, bound from the earth to dance and sing, and shout in a delirium of joy. We could neither see the Indian leap in hideous paint and with whirling tomahawk into the circle of the war dance; nor, when converted, hurl his tomahawk into the bosom only of the lake, and sit down as a child of peace, at the feet of Jesus, "clothed, and in his right mind."

To move the feelings and touch the hearts of men till waters flowed as to the rod of Moses from the flinty rock, and money poured into the Treasury of Liberty or Religion, it was necessary to call in the orator and the poet; to address the imagination through eloquent and pathetic pictures of the sorrows of humanity. Fortunately, at least, for our cause, our streets swarm with living evidence of the need of these schools. Their advocates are before us, in all the pathos of misery; begging, shivering, starving in the streets. What picture could I paint half so touching as the living spectacle!

> "Famine is in their cheeks;
> Need and oppression staring in their looks;
> Contempt and beggary hang upon their back."

I may state, for the information of those who have not read the first "Plea," that, while engaged in writing it, I had statistics, showing that there were at least One Thousand children growing up among us in total ignorance, and doomed to a career of crime. Their only hope of being saved, lay in the opening of an adequate number of Ragged Schools. Now since that "Plea" was published much good has been done; but how much remains undone! The numbers attending our own school and others are as follows:—

Rev. Messrs. Paul and Veitch's Ragged School	68
United Industrial School	100
The Original Ragged School (our own) .	210
	378

Assuming that there are no more than one thousand outcast children in Edinburgh, then we leave more than the half to perish. At that estimate, we bring off little more than a third from the wreck; and if, as is probable, the actual number is not one, but two thousand, there are then more than Fifteen Hundred children here who are growing up to disturb and disgrace society, to entail on the country an enormous expense, and to supply with their hopeless and unhappy victims our Police Office and prisons. How hard and melancholy their lot! These furnish fifteen hundred arguments for our schools. While one poor child remains unsaved, so long as one is left hanging on the wreck over the devouring sea, I have ground, firm as the truth of God, on which to appeal, both to your justice and generosity.

So much for numbers. Let me next present some idea of the state in which these children are when found. The following cases are copied from our books, or the record of the Police Office.

Case 1. "John H——, seven years of age, has been in the habit of sleeping in stairs, or wherever he can find shelter, and was sent to our school from the Police Office, where he was well known as a juvenile mendicant. He deserted school thirteen times; and when our teachers despaired of breaking in this young savage, a sister of about eight years old appeared at the school, as wild, wandering, and wayward as himself. The change on these children is such, that, instead of being a pest, they are now a pleasure."

Case. 2. "Anne B——, thirteen years of age, was sent here from the Police Court, having been convicted of public begging. She could read none, having never been at any school. Her mother is dead, and her father has long since deserted her. Her uncle resides in town,—goes to no church,—but keeps a low lodging-house in a mean locality. There are twelve beds in his house, and each of these is generally occupied by three or four persons. She had to carry drink to the lodgers at all hours of the night: and her fortune was, sometimes to get a bed for herself,—sometimes none at all. This poor girl, so nigh to destruction, has been rescued from circumstances which would have speedily ended in her ruin. She has found a Saviour and

an asylum in our Ragged School; and now, sheltered at night beneath the roof of a decent widow, she is happy, contented, and willing to do well."

Case 3. "Jane T——, about eleven years of age. She has been wandering about the town, begging in ordinary, and stealing when she could; sleeping on stairs, or wherever a place could be found for her head to lie on, along with her brother, who is such another outcast and wanderer. She was sent to our School from the Police Court. Their case, as well as many others, proves the early power of evil habits, and how difficult it is to tame these Arabs of the city. The day after being received into the school they both deserted. There was reason to believe that the boy had committed some crime, for which he had been thrown into jail. The girl was sought for: the lost sheep was found; and, by her excellent behaviour, she now promises, with God's blessing, to reward all the care and kindness she has received."

Case 4. "The son of Eliza J——, residing . . . . does not know his age; supposed about eight or nine; father dead; a smart, active child; and has been singing on the street and jumping Jim Crow for a considerable period past. He was formerly at the Industrial School, but was taken there-

from by his mother, who found it more profitable to have him singing and begging than being at school. Bailie Stott requests that he be again received; and should his mother try to take him again away, the Police will do all they can to get at her.

(Signed) JAS. MORHAM."

"POLICE COURT."

Case 5. "P. G—— was brought up as a vagrant. He confesses he had not been at school for two years, and frankly admits that he has been all that time going about stealing. He expresses his willingness to go to school. The family are said to be a bad one. The case is continued for a month. In case he absconds, he will require to be watched, as he confesses to have had a hand in many thefts.

(Signed) ANDREW JAMESON."

In regard to this boy,—sent to our school by the Sheriff-substitute, Mr. Jameson,* one of its warmest and most enlightened friends, and we may add that the Superintendent certifies his regular attendance, and the great satisfaction upon the whole, that he has given.

These examples may convey to the reader

* In the Appendix the reader will find a valuable letter from Mr. Jameson, where he bears his testimony to the operation of the Industrial Schools.

some idea of the hard and melancholy lot of these poor children.

The whole country has been agitated by discussions on education ; and debate has waxed warm and high on the question, whether the instruction of the people belongs to the Government, or should be left to voluntary enterprise. There are two sides to that question,—there is but one side here. If these wretched, neglected, and unhappy outcasts are to be taught and saved, there is no room to deny, or even doubt, the indispensable necessity of Ragged Schools. Nowhere else can the objects of our charity find a school and an asylum. Theirs is a hard and woeful lot ; nor could it perhaps be better set forth than in the following table, descriptive of the cases of the children who have attended our school during the last twelvemonth :—

	Above Eight Years of Age.		Infants.	Total
	Boys.	Girls.		
Fatherless, with drunken Mothers	22	18	23	63
Motherless, with drunken Fathers	22	18	17	57
Both Parents utterly worthless .	30	26	21	77
Certainly known as Children of Thieves	23	28	18	69

	Above Eight Years of Age.		Infants.	Total.
	Boys.	Girls.		
Believed to be so	35	48	47	130
Who have been Beggars . . .	88	79	65	232
Who have been in Jail . . .	11	7	...	18
Who have been in the Police Office	32	19	...	51
Who were homeless	15	12	...	27

These victims of parents' damnable and damning vices suffer through sins not their own. Look at that creature whose shivering limbs, and pinched and hungry features, appeal to your tenderest feelings! Are you to follow the footsteps of the good Samaritan; or, passing by on the other side, leave that hapless child to its miserable doom? Little do many know what misery, what bitter hours, what biting cold, what brutal usage are summed up in its short experience. This elf-like creature, whose infancy was neither cradled nor caressed, that stands here with naked limbs, and tangled locks, and "uncouth features, meagre, pale, and wild," has suffered day by day the most brutal usage,—usage such as, if inflicted on child, brother, sister, of yours or mine, would stir the very depths of passion, and make our eyes flash with angry fires! What

mothers they have! One night the street, along which I walked, was suddenly filled with loud piercing shrieks. A poor starved-like boy, whose mother was going with her paramour to drink, had followed her, remonstrating with her. She had turned on him like a wild beast. I found her beating him most savagely. And I well remember with what rage, when I had thrust myself in between them, and flung her back, she turned on me to justify her brutality; alleging that, as the child was hers, she might treat him as she liked. To the children of such mothers,—or monsters rather,—our school opens wide the gates of a most welcome and blessed asylum.

To leave them to the care of their parents, is to doom them to certain ruin. Are they to be taught industry by idleness? honesty by theft? sobriety by drunkenness? purity by pollution? decorum by indecency? the fear and the love of God by those of whom Scripture says, "God is not in all their thoughts." Those only who, like ourselves, have gone down into the dark abodes of poverty and crime, of fever, pestilence, and pollution, can form a sufficiently strong conviction of the utter folly of leaving these children to no other than parental care. In their ignorance some may wonder at our anxiety

to pluck the child from the arms of her whom nature teaches to love it. But vice turns a mother's heart to stone; and works a metamorphosis passing any by sung Ovid. How altered in the poet's hands does Lycaon grow!

"The tyrant, in affright, for shelter gains
The neighbouring fields, and scours along the plains.
Howling he fled, and fain he would have spoke;
But human voice his brutal tongue forsook.
About his lips the gathered foam he churns,
And, breathing slaughter, still with rage he burns;
But on the bleating flock his fury turns:
His mantle, now his hide, with rugged hairs,
Cleaves to his back; a famished face he bears.
His arms descend, his shoulders sink away,
To multiply his legs, for chance of prey.
He grows a wolf; his hoariness remains,
And the same rage in other members reigns."

The poet turns Lycaon into a ravenous wolf; but, as George Whitefield was wont to say, and thunder over awe-struck assemblies, sin has turned man into a monstrous compound of half-brute half-devil.

There can be no greater folly than to trust the drunkard's children to the drunkard's care. If habits of dissipation be once thoroughly rooted, character forfeited, and the powers of the mind prostrated by prolonged indulgence, vain is the struggle which domestic love, religious knowledge, and even

an anticipation of the dreadful issue, maintain with this master vice. To illustrate this, and to rouse a drowsy public, to awaken virtuous indignation against the drinking shops that are strewed, like some fatal shore, with wrecks of families, and fortune, and fame, and character,—let me select from many such cases. one which has left an indelible impression on my memory.

On the forenoon of a winter day, some seven years ago, I received a note, urging me, if I wished to save his life, to hurry to the abode of the writer. I knew him. He was a man of talent; and had an uncommon knowledge of Scripture. After seeing a great deal of the world, he had returned to spend his days at home, possessed of what, with a little industry on his part, would amply suffice for the maintenance of his family. A prudent, tidy, sober, sensible wife, with two or three fine children, made up his domestic circle; and a sweeter, happier home there might not have been in all Edinburgh. But what availed these? He was a drunkard. On my first visit to his district, I found him a woe-begone wretch; sitting idle and gloomy in a foul apartment; his wife heart-broken; and he himself the terror of his children, who, clad in rags, waited on no ministry, and went to no school. In course of time a very

remarkable change was wrought on his home and habits. The wilderness had become an Eden, and the desert a garden of the Lord! And it was a pleasant sight to see that man on the Sabbath day, —his family beside him, roses blooming on their cheeks, and their rags exchanged for comfortable and becoming attire. I have often looked at him with wonder as he sat before the pulpit, drinking in the truth, his glistening eye fixed upon the speaker. His home was now comfortably and fully furnished. Cheap and simple ornaments adorned its once naked walls. It was impossible to stand on the clean swept hearthstone, before the bright fire, amid so many comforts, with such a happy, cheerful family around, and not cling fondly to the hope that this was "a brand plucked from the burning."

Such had been the state of matters before I received the ominous note. It was with dark forebodings that I hastened to the house, and climbed five flights of stairs to the room where drunkenness and poverty had driven this man, and where, though brighter days had dawned, he still resided. His poor wife, "her eyes consumed with grief," with three children clinging in terror to their mother, was the first sight that met me. She put her finger on her lips; and led me into a neighbour's room. There

I heard all. He had been mad with drink for some days. Trembling for her own and her children's lives, she had had to seek an asylum beneath a kind neighbour's roof. The door of his room was bolted; but he opened it when I knocked and announced my name. What a scene was there! No furniture; no bedding; the fire quenched on the hearth; the very grate removed from the cold black chimney, —all sold for drink. And amid this desolation stood the man himself, that cold winter day, without coat, or vest, or stockings, or shoes,—the sleeve of his shirt rolled up to the shoulder, and a large knife in his hand. He had resolved on suicide, but stood uncertain how to leave the scene; whether by the knife; or by the window thrown up for the dreadful leap; or by a rope and noose, that hung ominous and frightful from a post of the bedstead. I dealt as I best could with this guilty and troubled spirit. His conscience was again awakened. Affection to his wife and children resumed its sway. He threw himself at her feet; he kissed his little ones, and accused himself of being the veriest, vilest wretch on earth! The scene, which would have melted a heart of stone, afforded me some hope that, from this new struggle with an old enemy, he might at length come off victorious—earning the blessings of his

family, and the praise of Him who hath said, "He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city."

Alas! his goodness was like the morning cloud: and by and by he abandoned his home, adding another to the vast number of miserable families which have been deserted by their natural protectors. In time he was forgotten, as a dead man out of mind. Yet we met again. Engaged, one day, in visiting in the Grassmarket, I entered a low lodging-house, kept by an Irishwoman. While conversing with some of her countrymen, the mistress said that a lodger in the back room wished to see me. She lighted a candle; and, stooping, followed by me, she entered a low, long, dark, narrow apartment, with beds, as thick as they could be placed, ranged on each side. She stopped by a bed, on which, under a dirty coverlet, that was drawn over the face, lay a human form, like a corpse beneath its shroud. A heavy sigh was the only answer returned to the question, Who wishes to see me? The face was at length uncovered; and the light of the candle fell on the haggard, death-stamped features of the wretched man who once seemed to have been saved. I was shocked at the sight; and shall never forget his piteous tone and despairing look, as he asked, "Is it possible, Sir, after all, I can be saved?"

There are many such unhappy men and unhappy families! Political economists may preach till "the crack of doom" on the natural rights of parents, and the dangers of abusing charity; but are we to allow parents to sacrifice their offspring to their vices,—to offer them in the fire to Moloch? We cannot stand by without attempting to rescue them. Who could, if they stretched out their little hands to us from the windows of a house which had been fired by their father in the frenzy of intoxication? Yet how strange it is that humane, kind, generous, good, Christians can smile their way along the streets where hundreds of poor children are perishing in a worse way before their very eyes!

The world presents few examples of the power of familiarity more palpable, or more painful, than may be seen in these streets. There, exposed to the biting blast, in faded weeds that are glazed with the soaking rain, sits a woman; a tender infant lies on her open lap; while, ever turning up wan, and sallow, and meagre faces for charity, a child on each side cowers beneath her scanty cloak. Less fortunate than the brood that swing cradled in downy nest beneath the warm feathers of a mother's wing, these creatures nestle close together, in the vain attempt, on that cold pavement, and beneath that

lashing rain, to warm their torpid limbs. How strange must it seem to angels, as they look down through that stormy sky, to see how this group of living misery attracts less attention than if,—the triumph of some sculptor's genius,—it were chiselled from a block of marble! And—most base and worthless pity!—people there are, of refined taste, and sentimental in their way, who would stand to gaze, and shed tears, on the cold stone, that pass this living group of sorrow with pitiless indifference.

They may tell us, in self-defence, that the mother is a wicked and worthless profligate. We cannot take that for granted. We have seen crime rustling in silks; a saint expiring on a bed of rags; and innocence begging bread on our streets. What scenes of virtuous sorrow and unpitied suffering could many of these old, lofty, begrimed tenements reveal!

> "Where the pallid mother croons to rest
> The withering babe at her milkless breast;
> She, wakeful, views the risen day
> Break gladness o'er her home's decay,
> And God's blest light a ghastly glare
> Of gray and deathy dimness there."

But grant the mother's profligacy. So much the worse for her children; and so much the greater, we add, the need of your interference. The apo-

logy which you make for your neglect, is an aggravation of its guilt.

The charity too often wasted on drunken mothers, we would apply to the benefit of their innocent offspring. And in proposing to interfere between the rapacity of the parent and the ruin of the child, we do nothing but what others elsewhere have proposed, and all men have commended. Turn your eyes on India! As if our humanity had grown warm beneath its sunny skies, we interposed the authority of British law to abolish infanticide. Though the sacrifice was on their part an act of devotion, we prevented Indian mothers casting their female infants into the stream. Here, as well as there, liberty should be restrained when it passes into licentiousness; and, wherever they are flagrantly abused, parental, as well as elective rights, should be withdrawn. It was a noble act to put down infanticide in India; yet why tolerate at home the horrid crimes committed by parents against their children? It looks as if our humanity was affected, like a thermometer, by climate, rising and falling with the temperature of the zones,—glowing beneath the sun of India, but cold and chill here as the fogs of our northern skies.

Does the reader ask, What can I do? Follow, we answer, where a princess leads. The castaway is be-

fore you, adrift, like Moses, on the stream: we stand anxiously by the river side, watching the result of this appeal. Ready to undertake the welcome task, we wait for you to say, with Pharaoh's daughter, "Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." We implore you to follow a yet higher example; and attempt an "Imitation of Christ" Himself. I have often thought, had He walked our streets, how Jesus Christ would have pitied these unhappy children! Who can doubt it, that remembers his parable of the good shepherd, who left the ninety and nine, to seek the lost sheep in the wilderness; nor abandoned the search till he could return, rejoicing that the lost was found? With such an example, who should refuse their help? Give as you are able; but give. Then, though still with sorrow, you can without shame look a helpless outcast in the face. You have done what you could.

It may encourage many to come to our help, as it has encouraged our Committee, to continue their exertions, to show how the tree, though planted but two short years ago, is not only budding, and blossoming, but, like Aaron's rod, is also bearing fruit.

Perhaps the most satisfactory evidence that I can give of this will be found in the following extract. Mr. Grimmond, our superintendent, writes,—

"There are four kinds of fruit resulting from the establishment of these schools :—

"*1st*, That reaped by the public, in being relieved from the molestation and importunity of swarms of juvenile beggars. Under this head I have only to say, that people, in talking to me about these schools, have often remarked that, since their institution, the streets are much more clear of that class.

"*2d*, The benefits enjoyed by the children, who have been lifted out of misery, and are now comfortable and happy. Any one may mark the difference between the juvenile beggar of the street and the child of the Ragged School : the lazy beggar is turned into a busy scholar ; the pale, sunken cheek is now fat and blooming ; and the miserable, sickly, houseless, uncared-for child is enjoying the blessings of Christianity.

"*3d*, The advantages gained by those children who have left these schools and entered on some useful employment, who are now doing well.

"*4th*, The fruit reaped by those who seem to have received, not only religious knowledge, but serious impressions, in our schools. Under this head I can confidently say, that during the Bible lesson these children are more attentive than any I have elsewhere seen. The death-beds of some have fur-

nished us with good ground for believing, that from these schools, and through means of them, some have gone to be with Jesus, and that some of your Ragged School fruits are already being reaped in glory. One poor little child, Betty M'K——, ten years of age, was blessed, I believe, through the Bible lesson she carried home, to lead her poor ignorant father to a knowledge of the truth. He died in the Infirmary; and, soon after, she fell into a fatal decline. She never fretted, having learnt to bear with patience all that God laid on her. In answer to my question, she said, 'I am not afraid to die;' and, as the reason of her confidence, added, 'because Jesus loves me.' On the evening before her death, her tongue, which had been tied for three days, was unloosed, and for some seven minutes she engaged in fervent prayer, saying, as she stood on the brink of eternity, that she thought it far better to depart and be with Jesus; and the Doctor and other Christian friends who visited her had no doubt that she was a lamb gathered into the fold. Some other cases, not less promising, I could give, but abstain, only adding, that the manner in which their parents or guardians describe to us how they used to sing with delight the hymns they had learned in the school, and tell about Jesus and heaven, showed that they at least

wished to be there. I have no doubt that some of their parents have been greatly benefited in this way; and I could take you to this one, and that one, and another one, who have become church attenders since their children came to the Ragged School; while others of them come and hear the Bible lesson in school along with their children on the Sabbath day.

"WILLIAM GRIMMOND."

We ask the reader's attention also to the following table:—

	Boys.	Girls.	Infants under Eight.	Total.
Number registered this year from date 26th March 1848 .	135	102	88	325
Remaining on Roll	89	69	54	212
		Removed .		113
Of the 113 who have left, —				
Left Town	8	6	2	16
Deserted, being determined Beggars	7	5	2	14
Sent to other Parishes, on which they had a claim . . .	6	4	3	13
Removed by death (4 of Cholera)	0	3	7	10
Gone to other Schools, their condition being improved .	7	6	6	19
Found employment	24	17	0	41

	Boys.	Girls.	Infants under Eight.	Total.
Of those at present in School,—				
Taught to read the Bible . . .	24	25	16	65
Taught to write	18	16	0	34*

In regard to our machinery and management I may state that we have three schools,—one school for boys, another for girls, and a third, which may properly be called the Infant School. All the scholars leave their homes or lodging-houses, or our own dormitories, to assemble at seven o'clock in the morning in summer, and eight in winter. The first exercise they go through is a purifying one. They doff their rags to march for some three yards under the invigorating, cleansing shower of a large bath. Attiring themselves in the school dress, they work an hour, and then (grace being said by one of the children) sit down to a comfortable breakfast of oat-meal porridge. With a reasonable allowance for play, so many hours are spent in industrial occupations,—so many in receiving instruction, both secular

* For other valuable statistics, and some weighty and important reflections which they have suggested, we refer the reader to a letter in the Appendix, from Dr. Bell, one of our valuable Secretaries.

and religious.* We seek to communicate a sound and saving knowledge of the Bible, because we believe that, while true of all children, it is emphatically and especially true of these, that "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." They dine at mid-day; and after another diet of oatmeal porridge about seven o'clock in the evening, they are sent away happy—to cheer sometimes even their dark and dreary homes, with lessons of piety and hymns of praise, learned in our school.

The discipline also of our school is one of its most interesting features. Our teacher, Mr. Gibb, has achieved the most singular success in breaking in these children, ameliorating their dispositions, and humanizing their whole character and habits. We remarked in our first "Plea," that they were not to be moved by hard words and harder blows, being too much accustomed to these at home, and having "learnt to be as indifferent to them as the smith's dog to the shower of sparks." From the beginning, we put our faith in kindness. It has been tried, and not found awanting. Those that would have bristled up before a harsh word or blow, have become soft and pliant in her tender hand; and care has always

* This will be found fully detailed in a table inserted in the Appendix.

been taken in the few cases of corporeal punishment to administer it with the smallest possible measure of pain, and the largest possible measure of kindness. The following extract of a letter received from a lady, will form a suitable introduction to some details belonging to school discipline.

"I went to the Ragged School to-day with some friends, and spent two hours among the boys, much to our amusement, and admiration both of them and Mr. Gibb. We were most fortunate in our choice of a day for our visit, for several interesting events occurred. A deserter was brought back, and regularly put upon trial; and truly it was as good as a play any day, to hear the examinations, as conducted by Mr. Gibb in presence of the assembled school, and the queer answers and odd reasons for running away, tendered by the culprit in his own defence. After he was heard for himself, every boy who in conscience thought he had done wrong was desired to hold up his right hand. The verdict was unanimous; and it was, Guilty. And then came the question of punishment. This was speedily decided by a special jury, selected from his own class, who retired to consult, and who returned in a few minutes, and, through their dux as chancellor, announced a sentence of twelve palmies. Mr. Gibb begged us to

remain and see the dose administered. Curiosity, and a lively interest in the scene, overcame the scruples of our tenderer feelings; and we were amply repaid by hearing the judicious, tender, and Christian admonition with which Mr. Gibb accompanied the correction,—explaining, both to the culprit and school, that punishment was administered on the well-known principle of these schools,—the motto of your 'Plea,'—'Prevention is better than cure.'"

Take the case of S——. This boy had deserted the school to resume his predatory and begging habits. Mr. Gibb had desired some of those who lived in his neighbourhood to get hold of him, and bring him back. Though they went to his house next morning, and repeated their visits for two or three successive days, they never got sight of him. "The nest was flown." To Mr. Gibb's surprise, however, one morning he saw S—— sitting in the work-room, under a strong guard; a sentinel on each side of him, and one in front. At his home by six o'clock in the morning, the boys had found him sitting beside the fire-place in his shirt. In vain, though backed by an elder brother, they told him to dress, and come along. On the appearance of force, he flew to the weapon, which, according to Walter Scott,

proved so effective in the hands of a famous Bailie, and, drawing a red hot poker from the fire, was like to put them all to flight. Two of them at length got hold of him, the third following with his clothes; and, doubtless, he had been carried in this state to school, but that his cries reached the ears of a policeman, who persuaded these rough *valets de chambre* to find him a dressing-room in a common stair. Mr. Gibb found him fertile in excuses for his bad behaviour. Finding none of them avail him, with the cunning of his class, he invented one on the spur of the moment, which he supposed would awaken the interest of some pious ladies then visiting the school. "I dinna like," said the rogue, "to come to this *scule*. I want to gang to a *scule* whar I'll get mair learnin', and learn to read the *Bible*." At this moment a gentleman entered connected with one of the Ragged Schools in London; and wishing to know how we managed disorderly boys, he was told that we had then a case in hand, and, if he pleased, he might stop and see the result. A jury of the school decided against S——; and when the sentence was about to be administered, the boys were asked if any of them would have the generosity to share his punishment. The appeal was not made in vain. Two or three stepped forward, each

more anxious than another to bear a part of the penalty.

The change which our school has wrought on these children, through the power of kindness and religion, could not be better set forth than by a scene to which I will introduce my readers. Summer weather brings the butterfly from its chrysalis, and tempts the various insect tribes to roam on the wings of freedom through the sunny air; and to children of unsettled, roving habits, the summer days and the green fields have irresistible charms. Mr. Gibb found that, as the skies grew warmer, the school grew thinner; the roll of attendance shortened with the length of the day. He found it necessary to enact, "That no boy shall go away from school, until he is prepared to remain away altogether, or to submit, on his return, to a certain measure of punishment." The law was passed with acclamation, and he thought all was right. Next day, however, a dozen had absconded. On being brought back, they said they wished to remain at school; but the four ringleaders refused to submit to the punishment. They were obstinate, and refused to yield, which to Mr. Gibb was a great grief, as they were biggish boys, and stood most of all in need of such a school.

He resolved to try and bend them, by an appeal to their better feelings, saying,—

"Boys, we will not compel you to accept of the food and instruction of which hundreds like you would be glad, who have it not. If you like to remain, submit to the rules, and you are welcome. Will you do it?"

"No, Sir."

"Would you have me tell a lie, by not acting up to my word?"

"No, Sir."

"Would you like to remain, and be allowed to do as you please?"

"No; because we would go wrong, Sir."

"Why, then, not submit to the rule you agreed to?"

"We'll stop if you'll no *lick* us, Sir,—if you'll no gi'e us *palmies*."

"Boys, were you ever punished before? and why?"

"Because we deserved it."

"And don't you deserve it now? Take it, and be done with it."

After trying them in this manner for some time, without any success, Mr. Gibb addressed them in a farewell speech, suited to the taste,

and calibre, and character, of those he spoke to, saying,—

"Well, then, boys, I think I have done;—I can do nothing for you;—I dare not let you pass. You are going away, and it may be that I will never see you more. Perhaps I will see you rich and respectable men. Perhaps I will see you masters of a fine shop, standing behind the counter, with your hair nicely curled, and dressed like gentlemen. Or, may be, when I am an old man, and walk leaning on a staff, I will see you rolling by in a fine carriage, drawn by two gray horses, attended by grand servants, and a beautiful lady seated by your side; and when you see me, you will say, 'Look, there's the Ragged Schoolmaster, that used to lick us when we were laddies: here, Mr. Gibb; there's something to keep your pocket.' Now, these things may be; but ah! my boys, I much fear that if ever I see you riding, it will be in one of those dark, gloomy carriages, with the locked door and iron gratings, conveying you,—you know where to!"

"Yes, Sir."

"And is it not likely, if you go away from the school, that you will be obliged to sink to begging again? And then your next step down will be to stealing; and down and down you go. But whether

I may see you again in this world or not, I do not know. One thing, however, is certain, we shall meet again,—and where?"

Their heads, till then erect, now began to hang down; and, as one or two answered, "At the last day, Sir," they, and the greater number of the children, as if by a sudden shock of electricity, burst into tears. The Superintendent of Work, who had worn the red coat for upwards of thirty years, turned on his heel, and the tear glistened in the old soldier's eye, while nothing was to be heard but sobs and sighing. Now was Mr. Gibb's time to drive home the wedge; and so, though almost overcome himself, he said, "All that I ask of you now, my boys, is a shake of your hand, and we part good friends." Nothing remained now for the poor fellows but to go. Moving slowly to the door, and all the while crying bitterly, they shook hands with their companions, and went,—but returned. On the threshold they yielded to the master's last appeal, fairly conquered, and examples of the all but omnipotent power of Christian wisdom, combined with Christian kindness.

It is but an act of justice to our admirable teacher, to the school, to the cause, and to the children themselves, that I should close this part of my "Second Plea," by the following letter:—

RAGGED SCHOOL, RAMSAY LANE,

25th December 1848.

REVEREND SIR,—I can say that, of the many boys that have attended the Ragged School, I have met with few (indeed none) who have not shown the greatest readiness to do me a personal kindness, either in school or out of it. To show this, many instances might be given. Allow me only to trouble you with the following:—J—— C—— lost his mother, who was an Irishwoman, and his father, who was a Scotchman (by trade a shoemaker), when he was about six years old. When I found him, he had been trying to provide himself with food and lodgings for upwards of a year, by carrying luggage for passengers to and from the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway. He seemed rather destitute, and I asked him to come to school; but it was not till some time after, when he had got a sore foot, that he found his way thither.

Afterwards I was seized with typhus fever, and two or three of the boys called to inquire for me every day. C—— came regularly morning and evening, and was always very anxious to see me; and so long as he was told I was no better, he went away crying; but when he was told that I was getting better, the tear was changed to a smile. On the evening before I went to the country for change of air, he was asked to come next morning and assist me to the Canal boat. He got me safe on board; and when we had started, I was surprised, on looking out at the window, to see half a dozen of the Ragged School boys, with C—— at their head, running alongside, and crying, "Yonder he's;" and this they continued to do till the boat went off at full speed, when they returned, after running nearly half a mile. One day shortly after, on taking a walk in the country, a boy was seen approaching, dressed in clothes that I had seen in the Ragged School; and as he came nearer he began to smile. I was a

little surprised to find that it was C——. He had collected his halfpence till he had raised sixpence, and then set away on the Canal to see his master, with no other prospect than to walk home; of course his return fare was made up for him. C—— is now working to a flesher, and lodging in the same house with a boy who was once his companion in adversity, and a Ragged School class-mate; and that boy being scarcaly able to clear his way, while C—— has something to spare, he gives a little, to enable his old fellow-sufferer and scholar to live as comfortably as himself.

In regard to any real saving change being made on these children, I would not like to speak with too much confidence. Any one who knows much about either them or their parents, knows that they are too ready to appear to bear in mind whatever is most likely to benefit their body. One thing, however, is certain, viz. they are a very great deal kinder to each other than they formerly were; and last week I had a visit from all their mothers or landladies that could attend, for the purpose of ascertaining whether any difference, either for better or worse, had been observed in the conduct of any of them since they came to school. Not one of them answered, For the worse. In almost every case the answer was, *For the better*, and that the children were more obedient than they used to be. One said, her sons were "very much improved, and not like what they were before at all: they are like new weans altogether." Another said, "They are more kind to each other, and to their sisters; and instead of spending their evenings in running on the streets, as they used to do, they now spend them in singing and reading." Another, that her son "now works at his slate, and reads his Bible, and sings hymns." Another, that her son "is a good deal healthier, and a better boy *entirely*." Another (a blind woman) says, she knows not how to express her gratitude to the people of the Ragged School; for her son is now able to read to her at night,

and *tells her nice stories about Jesus*, and sings sweet hymns; and so forth. From these and similar facts, I have reason to believe that the good already done by means of these schools will tell on generations yet unborn; and that some of these poor outcasts will bless God through all eternity, that there was once such a thing as the Ragged School.

Rev. and Dear Sir, I hope you will excuse the somewhat brief and familiar manner in which I have endeavoured to give you a few facts as they stand. I thought to have had them forwarded sooner, but the business of the school, and family sickness, prevented.

REV. SIR,

Your obedient Servant,

GEO. GIBB.

To these cases, furnished by the teachers, I may add another, told to me by a humble but honest neighbour of the mother of one of these boys. Dismissed from a comfortable situation for glaring misconduct, and unable, from bodily infirmity, to earn her bread, the mother betook herself to begging on the streets. This proved a source of gains, which she wasted on habits of drunkenness. The more money to the mother, the more misery to the child. When the mother was intoxicated she was infuriated; and the hapless boy often fled from her cruelty to the common stair, where, with his head pillowed on a step, he lay the long winter night, to sleep,—when the cold would let him. Some kind Samaritan brought

the child to our school, ignorant as a heathen; knowing neither his letters, nor anything of a God and Saviour. He has now been some twelve months with us; and our humble friend, the tenant of a room five storeys up, and living, to use her own expression, *but* and *ben* from them, tells us that she has often heard him, on his return in the evening, speaking to his mother as if he were an old, gray-haired Christian. With more sense than some beyond his years, he has learnt the divine lesson,—"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs; neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." So, when he finds his mother drunk, he is silent; but on her sober evenings he reads the Bible to her,—tells her how the master said this and said that,—and, graciously inverting the order of nature, is the monitor and instructor of his own mother. Through the thin partition which separates these upper rooms of poverty from each other, she has often listened with amazement to this child's affectionate warnings. Once he said, "Ah! mither, mither, what a dreadful thing, when Jesus Christ comes to judgment, if I, standing at his right hand, should see my mither on the left; and you're sure to be *there* if ye live on as you're doing." The remarkable demeanour of this boy,

and the visible change wrought on his habits and appearance, have recommended our Ragged School to the neighbours round about. He has earned for it and us the kindliest regards of that humble neighbourhood—a name there "above all Greek or Roman fame;" for of how much truer value than the applause of a world is the blessing of those who are ready to perish!

Such are the fruits and discipline of our school; and I have not to tell the reader that money spent upon the young is spent with greatest promise. I have not the shadow of a doubt, that by one single pound contributed to the Ragged School, you will do more good than by one hundred pounds spent on Penitentiary or Prison; just as by the power of a one-pound weight you can give a bent to the tender branch, which the weight, not of one, but of one thousand pounds, cannot impart to the giant arm of some gnarled hoary tree. That breaks, but refuses to bend.

Growing more and more alive to the prophet's question, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" our eye turns from other schemes to these schools with the fondest anticipations. They offer to our outcast population "a door of hope in the valley of Achor." Other plans of

benevolence have been tried on the masses. Home and City Missions have had their period of probation; and they have proved how hard, we dare not say how hopeless, a task it is to turn the river which has cut itself a channel in the rock; to change the character of a population that are hard and set in crime. While we would follow the hoary-headed sinner to the edge of his grave, with calls to repent and offers of mercy, still they are the most promising efforts that take the direction of the young. Therefore, the Ragged School has claims on a humane and Christian public,—we shall not say before all other schemes—but second to none. When we undertake to supply each child with food and education at an expense of L.5 per year,—when, for so small a sum of money, a poor outcast may be saved from present misery and eternal ruin, surely multitudes will be found out of their own abundance to give, or by the help of others to raise, this sum. God pity the poor, if, amid the abounding comforts, and wealth, and luxuries of this Christian land, the only doors left open to these outcast children are the dreary portals of the Police Office and the Prison!

The stability of the empire is bound up with such schemes as ours. What Philanthropy prompts to, and Piety recommends, true Patriotism demands. If

those elements of corruption and mischief, which we have done so little either to resist or restrain, are allowed to spread for the next half century as they have done during the past, we tremble for the issue. So soon as the leaven has leavened the whole lump, what shall the end of these things be?

I believe that the higher, the middle, and some of the humbler classes of society, have not degenerated, but improved, in their moral and religious habits; but there is a class lying beneath these, at the bottom of the social fabric, which, in whatever aspect it be regarded, calls for the serious attention of the country. They have no religion; they instil no moral principles into their offspring; their minds are uncultivated; their habits are brutal, profligate, and licentious. In London, in Glasgow, in Edinburgh, and in other such cities, they are increasing at most a dangerous ratio on the educated, and church-going population. Through many districts of the country also, and in a large number of our provincial towns, the same class are springing up and growing with a terrible rapidity. They are mushrooms in growth; but in durability are cedars.

This may be illustrated by the case of Maybole, —a small town, numbering, with the country part of the parish, some five thousand people. It lies in a

sweet district in Ayrshire; "beautiful in situation;" surrounded by a fertile country; and hallowed to the memory of Scotchmen as the scene where John Knox and his dexterous antagonist Quentin Kennedy, Abbot of Crossraguel,—the respective champions of Protestantism and Popery,—fought, within a house still standing there, the battle of their respective faiths. From the hill which rises between it and the sea, the shores of Ireland can be discerned; and across the narrow channel hordes of Irish papists have passed to deluge with misery, and beggary, and the lowest habits, that beautiful land. The Scotch have been too ready to receive the *virus;* and become centres of infection. A class accordingly has sprung up there, ignorant alike of the decencies of society, and the habits of religion. On week-days the streets and roads swarm with beggars, in rags and wretchedness, nakedness and squalidness, and other repulsive signs both of poverty and of profligacy. On the blessed Sabbath, grown men and women, and young people of all ages, are strolling through the streets; or standing idly in their doors; or roaming over the country, and disturbing its hallowed peace, in their every day—we suspect with many, their only—attire. My friend Mr. Brown, banker and writer there, with most creditable courage and

humanity, is grappling with the evil, and endeavouring to establish a Ragged School. Would all elsewhere do the same, the country might yet be saved. The main cause of the wretchedness there or anywhere else, is not the want of money, but of morality. We have reason to believe that there is as much money spent, and a large portion of it by this very uneducated, poor, and profligate class of people in this parish of Maybole, on spirits and tobacco, as equals nearly the whole landed rental. How monstrous that whisky and tobacco shops which find their best customers among the uneducated, the poor, and the profligate, should draw a revenue little short of what the landlords do from their fields and farms! Sixteen thousand pounds, it is said, are yearly wasted on noxious or useless stimulants; while the poor and other rates are advancing with railroad speed. When will the respectable classes of the community awake to the necessity of arming in defence of the nation's religion, virtue, and property? Unless means are employed to change the habits, and arrest the formidable advances of this class, the dream of Pharaoh shall be realized in other lands than Egypt, where the lean kine devoured the fat, and were no fatter thereby!

Improvidence and dissipation create that class

which threaten the welfare of our country, and multiply the objects of our Ragged Schools. I know that Acts of Parliament can neither make men moral nor religious; yet much can be done by Government to remove sources of temptations from the people, and foster habits of thrift and sobriety. The children of our manufacturing districts being able, by means of the wages they earn, to cast off the parental yoke at too early an age, there is the more need to teach them habits of prudence and foresight. The earnings of the father exeeeding but by little those of his child, and inadequate, without these, to feed the unproductive members of the family, parents are afraid to correct and curb their children; while head-strong youth is ready to resent the interference, and abandon the parental roof. Nor is this all the evil. In some cases the parent wastes on vice the wages of his children; while in all cases he lies under a powerful temptation to withdraw them from school before they have received an adequate education. Imperfectly educated, and independent, at an age too early, of parental authority, it becomes the more necessary to guard our manufacturing youth from temptations to evil, and to compass them round with inducements to thrift and economy. The earlier the plant is drawn from

the nursery-bed, the more need there is to plant it in some sheltered and sunny nook.

Now, how are our manufacturing and handicraft youth situated? By public-houses and spirit-shops they are surrounded with innumerable temptations; while to many of them Savings Banks are hardly known by name. Dissipation has her nets drawn across every street. In many of our towns, sobriety has to run the gauntlet of half a dozen spirit shops in the space of a bow-shot. These are near at hand—open by day and blazing by night, both on Sabbath and Saturday. Drunkenness finds immediate gratification; while economy has to travel a mile, it may be, for her Savings Bank; and that opens its door to thrift but once or twice a-week perhaps.

The consequences of these temptations, and this neglect, are becoming so formidable, and, it would appear, by all existing means so incurable, that some wise and sagacious men are disposed to ask the interference of the Government. They could compel all under a certain age who receive wages, to deposit a proportion of them in bank. It may be said that this is an interference with man's natural liberty. But they answer, that that has been already encroached on by various Acts of

Parliament. The hours of work, both in mills and collieries, are regulated by law; and the seamen of some, if not of all our harbours, are compelled by Act of Parliament to invest a proportion of their wages to maintain themselves and families, when disabled from labour by accident, or by the infirmities of a premature old age. Such a proposal may be impracticable; but this admits of no doubt, that it is vain to deal with disease as with health; and if it be granted that God never fitted the child for circumstances where, ere it has reached the age of puberty, it becomes independent of parental support, and can defy parental authority, such an abnormal condition justifies, and demands extraordinary remedies. This at least the law can, and ought to do,—it should put down nine out of ten of these drinking shops; and grant no man a license to deal in spirits whose character does not furnish good security that he will not trade in crime, and make his house a centre of drunkenness, and a curse to the neighbourhood—raising a house to himself out of the wreck and ruin of other men's homes, and characters, bodies and souls.

While trusting to the gospel of Jesus Christ as the only efficient regeneration of our fallen race, it is well to avail ourselves of every check to this dam-

nable and destructive vice. The requiring of certificates by applicants for license, the discipline of the Church, and last, though not least, Temperance and Total Abstinence Societies, are all commendable. They have accomplished much good: still they have not eradicated the evil. Why, as an additional check, should not the masters of these public-houses, and other venders of ardent spirits, be compelled to bear the burden of the poverty which their trade is the means of producing? How many families do they reduce to poverty, beggary, and want? It were but justice, that the man who knowingly, and for his own gain, supplies the poor drunkard with the means of destruction, should be compelled to maintain his family. Should a man be allowed to trade in crime, and not only go scatheless of the consequences, but get the public to bear them? Are there not thousands of the venders of spirits who supply the stimulant where they know that it goes to destroy the drinker's health, and beggar his family? Instead of ardent spirits, let a man, knowing that the purchaser buys the article for purposes of suicide, sell arsenic or prussic acid; and, the very least that justice requires in such a case, is that he shall maintain the family of him in whose death he was *art and part.* Why should not the

innocent sufferers of a parent or husband's dissipation obtain such recourse in law against those who, for their own gain, tempted him to ruin, and involved them in poverty? This would close, within another week, nine-tenths of those low drinking-shops. Never, in the most frightful panic, had the banks such a run for money as these would have for damages.

I venture, while on this subject, to suggest a question. When, in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, the drunkard becomes not only a disgrace to his friends, but often also, in some shape or other, a burden on the community, destroying the happiness, if not the lives, of his family, dissipating their substance, and reducing them to want, why should we stand by, without interfering between his madness and his offspring? Were the man insane, in the common sense of the term, the law allows our interference. It steps in; takes his keys; and manages the property for the benefit of his household,—shutting him up within the walls of an asylum. While the fumes are in his brain, the drunk man is a madman if the temptation come in his way, and the habitual slave of this vice is as incapable of controlling his appetite by his reason, or conquering his passions by his judgment, as the inmate of a lunatic asylum. It becomes one species, and the worst spe-

cies, of monomania. Account for it as physicians or metaphysicians may, the man is as unable to resist the attractions of the spirit-bottle, as a piece of iron those of the magnet, or a stone that of the earth. Accusing himself, and often cursing the day he was born,—bitterly mourning his disgrace, and the fate which he sees impending on a happy home,—knowing as well as others do, that he is ruining both body and soul,—*yet* he yields to the temptation; and is swept along, spell-bound, impotent to resist. It were the kindest thing to them, and best for all dependent on them, that the slaves of this horrible vice should be dealt with as lunatics. Left at large, they waste their property, and health, and life. They die at a premature age. They burden the sober and industrious with the support of innumerable widows and children. But let them be confined to the walls of an asylum, let them be compelled to engage there in regular and industrial employments, and perfectly isolated from all intoxicating liquors, the old cravings and habits would die out. In course of time, many, most of them, with body and mind restored to a healthy tone, would return to the bosom of their families and the business of life, in a sense, *new creatures.* Why should not their friends, any party having an in-

terest, or the public officers of justice, have power to *cognosce* every man or woman who could be convicted, before a competent tribunal, of being an habitual drunkard? By every possible means we ought to protect the helpless offspring of the drunkard, and brand his crime with infamy. Surely it is high time that our country be delivered from the taunt of being, while claiming to be the most devout, actually the most drunken beneath the sun. The charge is not true; yet how great is our shame, and how enormous are the burdens entailed on us by the ignorance, indolence, diseases, poverty, and crimes, of which this national vice is the prolific parent!

If it is the duty of Government to remove as far as possible temptations to crime, it is no less their duty to employ all legitimate means of amendment and cure; and none present stronger claims on the support of the country, and the countenance of the State, than Ragged Schools. Standing apart from all questions about State endowments for ordinary education, they fall properly under the head of Police; and under a Government sufficiently enlightened to foster them, would prove one of its best institutions. The results of education as given without, in contrast to that given within prison walls, are not less certain than the results of those laws

which govern the march of seasons or the tides of ocean. The excellent men who teach within the jail would do ten times more good without it. For every one they turn out of prison a reformed criminal, they would keep ten out of it,—were their labours bestowed in Ragged Schools, on the class that furnish its tenants to the jail. When the day comes, that our legislators shall direct a larger portion of their time to matters of moral reform, and those social evils which have been allowed too long to eat like a cancer into the heart of our population, justice will be done in Parliament to the cause of Ragged Schools. Supposing, what here we neither affirm nor deny, that it is the duty of the State to support all the educational institutions of the country, —in such a case it is clear as noonday, that among the claimants for public aid, the first to be heard with a liberality co-extensive with their necessities, are these uncared for, unhappy children. To support in part or in whole educational institutions for the children of landowners, or merchants, or tradesmen, or well-paid workmen out of the public funds, and stint or starve Ragged Schools, is a monstrous abuse. In a procession of beggars the rags should flutter in the van; and from the public treasury others should be supplied only after we are served.

In other words, let our universities, colleges, academies, and parochial or congregational schools, give place to those which cannot live on fees, nor exist without external aid. Our object is, not to form accomplished scholars and a highly cultivated nation, but to save poor wretches from the gallows, the prison, or the penal settlement.

They who would move the Government must first move themselves; and through schools sustained by our exertions, we must, meanwhile, prove that the scheme is not only plausible, but practicable; every way worthy of the nation's adoption. It is not commonly the duty of a Government to precede, but to follow the country. Its movements should embody and express the mind of the nation. Nor can we expect the Government to take action in this matter till the steam is up, and pressing on its wheels. The sooner the better. Not only the well-being, but the very being of our country is bound up with this and other kindred schemes. With these it sinks or swims,—survives or dies. Political freedom and commercial prosperity are inseparably connected with the social state of nations. They wax or wane with it. "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."

Let it be borne in mind, that men form good members of society, yielding obedience to the laws, and respecting the property, life, and liberty of others, under the influence of two, or one of two, principles. Obedience to the law springs from regard either to God or man, or to both; and therefore true freedom cannot permanently stand on any other foundations than those of morality and religion. With these beneath her, Liberty has a solid pedestal; without them, she is raised only to fall. Look at the experience of France! Since she lost so much of her best blood in the massacre of the Huguenots, her head has never been steady. As a nation,—great in many respects as they are,—our neighbours across the Channel want the elements of moral and religious principle; hence they have oscillated, and till delivered from the baneful and disturbing influences of Popery and Infidelity, they will continue to oscillate, like a pendulum, between Despotism on this hand, and Licentiousness on that.

Unless restrained by the love and fear of God, there is nothing to hedge men in within the boundaries of law, save attachment to country, the love or fear of man. But, left to grow up without any knowledge of God, or regard to his law, what do they owe the country who furnish the material of our

Ragged Schools? What has the country done for them to attach them to it? It has left them to be tempted to crime, and then punished them for its commission. They see thousands, day by day, passing them without so much as a look of pity. Their sorrows all unheeded, how often are they denied the cheapest compassion; and bidden begone, with the tone and gesture that drive away a troublesome cur? By some sudden change of fortune, let us taste their bitter cup,—let us find ourselves standing in the open street, in a cold winter day,—our naked feet upon the icy pavement,—the babe in our arms, half clad and half frozen to death,—a weary wife, with wan and shivering children cowering beneath poverty's threadbare cloak,—and, when stores, filled with every luxury, stand open around us, and savoury smells of food are steaming on the frosty air, and mothers, with groups of rosy, laughing children, furred and flannelled against the winter, pass by regardless of our pitiful sorrows, we should find it hard to be honest, hard to believe that it is right that we should die of hunger, while the cup of others is overflowing with comforts. If the thought of God came across us, we might fancy him looking down with indignation on the scene; and that a Father who regarded all his children with equal

affection, never intended that a few should monopolize the comforts which he meant for all. Luther says, that "there is no rebellion like that of the belly:" and how easily could we persuade ourselves, that poverty as well as property has its rights; and that we might employ force to compel what kindness should have spontaneously granted. The world has no such security against Socialism, Communism, and such dangerous doctrines, as our Holy Faith. It calls us to recognise in the different orders and lots of men, the providence of God; it fills us with aspirations after a better world; it supports us by the hope of it; and it teaches us, in whatsoever state we are, therewith to be content. But the class whose miseries we pity, and whose wrongs we seek to remedy, are moved only by other considerations. It would be hard to convince them that they have any earthly interest in maintaining the present order of society. Their place is the mire and mud. They lie at the bottom of the wheel. A revolution may improve their position: as one said, they may be better,—they cannot be worse. So argues Despair. And let a storm arise, that, reaching the depths of society, shall agitate this lowest class, and the country will learn that it was a miserable economy which left millions of uneducated, irreli-

gious, and desperate men, to form at once the tools, and the victims of revolution.

Politicians may rest assured, that when this rapidly-growing body of ignorance and crime has reached its full strength, they will have a giant to contend with. Events have proved that fighting is a game which other parties than soldiers can play at. Government by bayonets and batons is as uncertain as it is expensive; and the world is learning to its cost that the Bible, while the cheapest, is in every way the best instrument of government. It teaches man how to bear his wrongs till he find a right way to remedy them. It teaches the slave to break his chain, without breaking it on the head of his oppressor; and that he ceases to be a slave, not to become a despot, but to be a freeman.

Like some who ceased their alarm at the consumption of coal, on learning that the fields of Newcastle would keep our engines going and chimneys smoking so long as they were likely to live to travel, or roast to eat, there be base people, content to sit still without sacrifice or self-denial, if assured that the evils we dread will not happen in their time. All that they care for is that the ship swim so long as they are aboard. They are content if there be peace in their day. But what, with the water steadily

rising, if a storm should rise? It would precipitate the fate of the sinking vessel, and, throwing her on her beam ends, send her lurching to the bottom. A tree, decayed at the roots and loosened in the soil, may stand so long as the atmosphere is calm; but let a gale of wind spring up, and, with a crash corresponding to its magnitude, it falls to the ground.

We are no timid alarmists. I would adopt the brave words of the French general, who, arriving on the field where his gallant countrymen had sustained a defeat, pulled out his watch, and, glancing at the sinking sun, exclaimed, "There is time enough yet to fight another battle, and win it!" With our unexampled means, with our national energy, and, notwithstanding all our defects, with the amount of true Christianity in this land, I believe there is yet time enough to break up these formidable masses, and arrest the progress of ignorance and corruption. The foundations of society are not irremediably decayed. But if the causes which are now undermining the social fabric are left in active operation, this empire shall sooner or later fall like some majestic and splendid iceberg, whose foundations, hidden in the deep, have been worn by the water, hollowed by the waves, till, on some tempestuous day, the glittering edifice begins to rock, and,

toppling over, buries, amid the foaming surge and swell it raises, the unfortunate ships which had been moored to its sides, the unhappy mariners who had sought safety in its shelter.

To attempt to avert such a fate is every man's duty; and, more than he dreams of, is within every man's doing. This is no idle saying. Were we to make a pilgrimage, as soon as to the lonely heath where martyrs repose, we would direct our steps to the busy streets of Portsmouth; and would turn from the proud array of Old England's floating bulwarks to seek out the humble shop where John Pounds achieved works of mercy, and earned an imperishable fame. There is no poetry in his name, and none in his profession; but there was more than poetry in his life,—the noblest benevolence. Within the shop where he cobbled shoes, he might be seen surrounded by some score or two of ragged urchins, whom he was educating and converting into valuable members of society. Honour to the memory of him, beneath whose leathern apron there beat the kindest heart,—there glowed a bosom fired with the noblest ambition. Without fee or reward from man, while he toiled for his hard-earned bread with the sweat of his brow, this poor cobbler educated not less than five hundred outcasts, before they laid him

in his lowly grave! Honour, we say again, to the memory of this illustrious patriot! Nor is there any sight we would have travelled so far to see, as that self-same man, when he followed some ragged boy along the quays of Portsmouth, keeping his kind, keen eye upon him, and tempting the young savage to his school with the bribe of a smoking potato. Princes and peers, judges and divines, might have stood uncovered in his presence; and marble monuments might be removed from the venerable walls of Westminster to make room for his.

His history proves what a single-handed but right-hearted man may do; what,—would the reader address himself in earnest to the work,—he himself might do. Animated by his example, and encouraged by his success, we entreat you to turn an eye of piety and of pity on these unhappy children. These are the children of our common Father. Man, they are thy brothers and sisters,—bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh: their hard and melancholy lot may be thy crime,—it cannot be their own. Sinner, they are thy fellows! in them see an emblem of thy state when thou wast an outcast too; lying in thy blood when a God of mercy, passing by, looked on thee, and said, "Live." Christian, they were pitied by thy dying Lord: for them, as well as thee,

He bled, and groaned, and breathed his last on Calvary; and of such He said, "Suffer little children to come unto me."

Parents, you who know a father and a mother's heart, look on them; and thank God, who maketh one to differ from another, that their miserable lot is not that of your more fortunate offspring. As you smile on them, and see their bright, pleasant faces beaming round your board or cheerful fire,—as you bless their heads, and hear their hymns, and kiss them in their warm couch,—refuse not a tear, a prayer, a contribution, for many who often know a parent's curses, but never a Christian parent's care.

To God, in whose hands are the hearts of all men, we commend this cause. May He, who out of the mouth of babes and sucklings ordaineth strength, give effect to this appeal, and crown our labours with success. Thus shall these schools be instrumental, not only in saving many now lost to society, but in bringing many to Jesus. In their best, highest, and holiest sense, they shall realise the saying,—"THIS, MY SON, WAS DEAD, AND IS ALIVE AGAIN; HE WAS LOST, AND IS FOUND."

THIRD PLEA.

THE nineteenth century, though little more than half run out, will prove one of the most remarkable in the history of the world. As distance grows, many of what are now considered its great events shall, like mountains afar off, fade on the eye, and at length sink out of view. Time will fill up the letters which the sword has carved; new revolutions will throw down the barriers of existing empires; and, some centuries hence, the world will retain no trace of many who are now playing the chief parts on its stage. The men who have immortalized themselves and their times, are those who, amid the din of machinery, or in retreats remote from the bustle of camps, the intrigues of courts, and the noisy combats of public assemblies, have studied the arts, not of war, but of peace. When the world has lost

almost all of Wellington but his name, James Watt shall live in his inventions. His genius shall continue through untold generations to subdue the soil, and triumph over the sea; to employ the hands and fill the mouths of millions.

Among many peculiar features of our age, one of the most remarkable is the expansive and the comprehensive character of its benevolence. Our grandfathers or great grandfathers, though good people, were content to live for themselves. Their religion was contemplative rather than active. To live a holy life, to rear a virtuous and pious family, was the height of their ambition. Their sympathies were confined to a circle so narrow, that they remind one of the story told of an honest countryman, who, away from home, attended worship in the church of the parish where he chanced to be. The preacher was a great orator. The audience were moved to tears; not so the rustic. He sat hard and stolid as the bench beneath him; and replied, when asked how he could possibly sit unmoved by such a flood of pathos, "Oh, you see I don't belong to the parish."

In olden times, what did not belong to the parish, the neighbourhood, or the family, excited little interest. With exceptions hardly worth men-

tioning, the churches of Christ did nothing for the conversion of the heathen, either abroad or at home. Though there are now five vessels belonging to missionary societies sailing about their work in the Pacific Ocean alone, formerly no ships left London, Liverpool, Glasgow, or any other port, with missionaries among their passengers, and Bibles part of their cargo. Foreign, Home, City, Medical Missions; Sabbath Evening, Apprentice, Factory, and Ragged Schools; Bible, Tract, Pastoral Aid, and Total Abstinence Societies;—these, and many other such schemes are the growth and glory of our own age. Thus, while science and the arts have made unparalleled progress since heads now grey were black, and grown men were boys, the Church has not lagged behind. Pressing forward on her higher career, she has kept abreast of them in the race.

Another remarkable feature of our era, is the acknowledgment and practical application of the power of union; of co-operation, as better than individual action. Separate the atoms that form a hammer, and in that state of minute division they would fall on a stone with no more effect than snow-flakes. Weld them into one solid mass, and swung round by the quarryman's brawny arm, they descend on the rock like a thunderbolt. Stand by

the falls of Niagara, and as the waters, gathered from a hundred lakes, are rolling with the voice of a hundred thunders over the rocky precipice, fancy them divided into their individual atoms! They might gem with sparkling dew drops vast tracts of field or forest; in clouds of gold, and amber, and purple, they might hang curtains around the gates of day; but where were the onward, overwhelming power of the majestic flood? Gone; and gone the vaunt with which a New Englander met the boast of a Neapolitan, during a brilliant eruption of Vesuvius. The poor Italian had the glory of Vesuvius, if he had nothing else, to boast of in his priest-ridden country. Directing the attention of his companion to the mountain, as it shot up showers of fiery stones, and licked the sky with long tongues of flame, and poured streams of glowing lava down its riven sides, he exclaimed, "You have nothing like that in your country!" "No," said the other, with nasal twang, but thrust quick and sharp as rapier's, "yet, I guess, we have a bit of water that would put it out in two minutes." Now, as with the combined power of matter, so is it with the combined power of men. They do in masses what they would not attempt, or, attempting, could not achieve as individual units. Bravely and gallantly as our

soldiers fought at Waterloo, I doubt if there were twenty men on that field who would have stood up singly for seven long hours to be shot at like targets; yet massed in solid square and column, how they stood! from morning to sundown, facing the foe, and budging not a foot, till night crowned their brows with victory. The wise man says that "two are better than one;" and our Lord himself illustrated the advantages of union when he sent forth his disciples two by two.

From the expansive benevolence, and combined action which characterize the Christianity of our own age, have sprung up, among other holy enterprises, those Ragged Schools which I advocated years ago. The most needed, they have been the most successful of those philanthropic schemes which form at once a burden to the rich and a blessing to the poor. I remember the day when they were but a beautiful theory; in the eyes of many, but the rainbow-coloured dream of benevolent enthusiasts. In those days it was necessary to lay bare the bleeding wounds of humanity; to move the public by tales of misery, and raise, if we could, a flood of feeling to float us over the pecuniary difficulties that barred our way. Many were callous. People had got accustomed to the evils we sought to cure, as much

almost as the woman to the bad water she had used from childhood; and who, on being asked what she thought of the supply which municipal reformers had brought to the town, declared it not worth drinking,—for "it had neither taste nor smell!" Some, like the old masters of painting, seemed to consider rags rather picturesque than otherwise: and in the great mass of men and women familiarity with the evil had bred indifference, if not contempt. Others there were who ridiculed the idea of reforming society, so far as in any perceptible degree to lessen the amount of crime. They deemed us fanatics if not fools; and buttoning up their pockets, settled the question with this sage aphorism, as long as there are pockets to pick, there will be pick-pockets. They did not seem to see that their mode of treating the subject might be applied to other things besides Ragged Schools. It might be said, why attempt to prevent murder? as long as there are throats to cut there will be cut-throats. Away with light-houses! as long as there are ships there will be shipwrecks. Away with drugs and doctors; as long as there are diseases there will be deaths. Away with our national defences! as long as the French remember Waterloo there will be danger of an invasion.

A more serious objection to Ragged Schools, seemed to lie in the averment, that by feeding and educating the children of the abandoned, we were bestowing a premium on crime. It was based on the same mistake as the fault some find with the comfortable temperature, the cleanliness, and the good diet of our prisons. These, it is said, act as inducements to crime; they tempt honest men to become rogues, since rogues find themselves better off in jail than honest, hard-working men at home. This is a mere fallacy. I know how rogues weary for the end of their sentence,—counting the months, and days, and hours; aye, and the minutes. Put it to the proof; and it will be found that the most destitute wretch thinks clean walls, and warmth, and substantial diet a poor set-off against wild joys, and the sweets of liberty. Withdraw the warders; throw open the prison gates; and how many of the tenants, for love of the comfortable lodgings, will remain? Not one. They would swarm out like bees in summer day from the door of a hive. Not one of them but holds it better, in the words of the old mosstrooper, "*to hear the laverock sing than the mouse cheep.*" And he who fancies it would be otherwise, is not more ignorant of human nature than such as fear that decent parents will

give themselves up to dissipation, because they know that their children will find a refuge within the walls of a Ragged School. Children are indeed pledges for good conduct, hostages which men give the state; and, like a vessel which owes her safety to her moorings, many parents owe their goodness, and some have owed even their greatness, to the affections that bind them to their offspring. In humbler spheres than his, many have felt the power which introduced Lord Erskine to fortune. When a briefless barrister, with a wife and children to support, he got engaged in a great cause; he pled it before the assembled rank, and power, and genius of England; and won it. Asked how he, unaccustomed to public speaking, was able to speak so fluently, boldly, and brilliantly before such an audience, he replied that he thought, as he rose to his feet, that he felt his children pulling at his gown, and crying, "Father, father, now is the time to make our bread." I admit this influence, and indeed recognize in it the beneficent arrangement of Providence; yet what sober, industrious, affectionate father ever became an idle, drunken profligate, from expecting his children to find parents in the patrons of a Ragged School. I never met with or heard of such a case. Fallen as man is, he is not sunk so

low as that. By other paths, and through other doors, men descend the easy steps to perdition. Irreligion, and ignorance, beer and dram shops, not Ragged Schools, make drunken parents and destitute children. These schools have no more tendency to produce ragged children, than paper mills the rags which they manufacture. Converting the offspring of the thief and drunkard into valuable members of society, they may be justly likened to those beautiful machines, which out of foulest rags bring sheets of a snow-white fabric, to receive from pen or types the tenderest sentiments or the noblest truths, and carry them to the ends of the world.

Commenced fifteen years ago, Ragged Schools have now had a full trial; and their benefits, to use the words of Dr. Chalmers, are matter not of experiment but of experience. The tree, said our Lord, is known by its fruit; and by that unerring test we are willing, and indeed anxious that they should be tried. For this purpose, I might crowd these pages with statistics drawn from the provincial towns, as well as from the largest cities of the kingdom; and all demonstrating their entire success. These institutions are everywhere; and the best proof of their value lies, perhaps, in the fact that no Ragged

School once opened has ever been shut up, while other schemes, from French republics downward, have burst like soap bubbles.

The poor cobbler, John Pounds of Portsmouth, the great paper-maker, the late Mr. Cowan of Edinburgh, and other less known but not less benevolent individuals, gathering together some poor children, and bridging the gulf between ignorance and education with a loaf of bread, initiated our system many years ago. But to Mr. Watson, sheriff of Aberdeen, belongs the honour of raising the Ragged School to the status of a public institution. The scheme, as it came from his hand, was but "an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains." Yet, more fortunate than many philanthropists, he has lived to see it shake, and scatter, and spread itself, till now harvests of saved ones are gathered year by year from every corner of the land. Its birth, like that of Him on whose bosom it seeks to lay these children, was obscure. It had no solemn or brilliant inauguration; yet that which began some fifteen years ago in a loft in a mean street in Aberdeen, has now grown into a national institution, at whose meetings nobles deem it an honour to preside; to which the churches lend their countenance, and the State its support.

To attempt to collect all the facts from the wide field occupied by Ragged Schools, would lay this plea open to the critique pronounced on an English Dictionary, which a wag had handed to a witling in search of something to while away an hour. "A very good book," he said, after having travelled over pages on "and," "apple," "at;" and "bee," "bone," "but;" "calf," "cat," and "cow;" "but it says amazing little on each subject." Such were this plea, should I attempt a history of all the Ragged Schools that lie between St. George's Channel and the Pentland Firth. Besides, it would present little else than tables of dry statistics. This I shall avoid: because, though good in measure, and, like those solid parts of the frame which support the flesh, very necessary to sustain an argument, statistics, like a dish of bones, are dry eating; hard to chew; difficult of digestion.

The most interesting and instructive way of dealing with the matter, will be to choose a sample of the stock. For that purpose, I take the Original Ragged School of Edinburgh. I select that, not because it is better than others, but because it is the school at whose birth I presided, and with whose history, growth, and progress, I am best acquainted.

Now, taking that as a fair specimen of Ragged Schools, I state,—

I. That these Schools have put down the great evil of juvenile mendicancy.

Twelve years ago, before our Schools were opened, the streets of Edinburgh swarmed with boys and girls whose trade was begging, and whose end was the jail. They rose every morning from the lower districts, like a cloud of mosquitoes from a marsh, to disperse themselves over the city and its suburbs. Defiant of the police, they pursued their calling with a perseverance that amounted to persecution. People were glad to give money to get rid of them. These beggars, when force failed, had recourse to fraud; the motto of old and young being *Arte vel Marte*. For instance, a humane friend of mine, and a clever woman besides, had often assisted a widow and her child. Well, the girl one day presented herself with eyes streaming in tears, and her little heart like to break with sobs—her mother was dead. Ever ready to weep with them that weep, my friend gave linen for a shroud, and money for a coffin. By and by, such a genial day as brings out the first flowers and songs of spring, tempted her, for she was delicate, out of doors. Something in the street recalled to her memory the poor orphan and its dead mother.

At that moment she turned a corner; and suddenly found herself face to face with the corpse. It is impossible to fancy her astonishment. Had she met this awful object in the gloaming, or under the pale moonlight, she might have dropped down, struck with fear; but to meet the dead walking about in broad day, and in busy streets, was contrary to all precedent. She was speechless; and before she had time to solve the mystery, the opportunity vanished,—and the apparition also; for that, equally surprised, took to its heels, and made off apace in the form of a sturdy beggar.

The very children of this caste were great actors and remarkably ingenious. I one day witnessed an instance of this in a boy, who, when typhus fever was raging in town, performed that difficult operation vulgarly called *skinning a flint.* The patient was a sour, meagre, vinegar-looking, old lady; the operator a little fellow, without shoe on his foot, cap on his head, or shirt on his back; but with a pair of bright eyes gleaming out of hollow sockets. Having observed him fix his regards on the old woman, I watched the proceedings. He approached her with a most pitiful look and whine. He might as well have spoken to a stone. To use the slang of his class, *it was no go.* Her response was a snarl

and poke of her umbrella. Seeing at a glance how the land lay, he put up his helm, and went off on another tack. Addressing himself to her selfishness, in an instant he rolled up the sleeve of a tattered jacket, and sticking his yellow, skinny arm in her face, he edged close up to the old body, saying, "Out o' the Infirmary, ma'am, with typhus." It was a *ruse* got up for the occasion; but the acting was perfect—the effect sudden, electric. The poor creature started as if she had received a shock. At one dive her hand was deep in her pocket. Seizing the first coin, she dropped it into his palm, and hobbled away; glad to get the little rogue from between the wind and her nobility.

We had no Ragged School then; and I did not commit this urchin to the police. Why should I? I knew that he would be in their hands too soon,—caged like a captive bird; and I had not the heart to shut up that free denizen of the streets within four stone walls, and rob him of his liberty, wild though it was. So long as society stood by, careless what became of him, nor stretching out a hand to keep his head above water, she, the greater sinner of the two, had no right to assume virtuous airs.

Besides, what good could come of locking him up in a prison? Did my reader ever visit a jail?

Did you ever look in at the eyelet of a cell-door, and within those naked walls see a little boy—immured in that living coffin? He should be playing with laughing mates on the village green, or chasing the butterfly over flowery mead, or nutting in the bosky glen, or fishing some crystal stream, or conning his lesson amid the hum of the busy school, or sitting with brothers and sisters in the ruddy gleam of the fireside at home; but there he pines; lonely; weary; spirit crushed; the lustre quenched in his eye; rosy health faded from his cheek; and all vigour gone out of his unknit frame. I have seen that; and if you could look on that without a touch of pity, and without hating prisons as schools for childhood, I would throw down my pen in despair.

What effect have prisons had in deterring from crime, or in reforming criminals? Weighed in the balance, they have been found wanting. How could it be otherwise? Just as the caterpillar leaves its chrysalis case a perfect insect, the young delinquent emerges from his cell a fully developed criminal. Besides bearing the brand of a prison, he is lost. After that, as one poor fellow said to me, "We have not a chance, sir." What tradesman will take them into his shop, or what mistress into her kitchen?

They are shut out from all honest employment. They will not starve; they must steal. Society, having first neglected, now shakes off the drowning wretches: they sink, and no wonder! Self-respect—next to the fear of God, man's best bower anchor—gone, they drift on, a wreck without mast or helm, to certain ruin. Don't blame them for throwing themselves into the arms of their old associates; none others are open to receive them. They have neither choice nor chance in this Christian land.

It is not to be supposed that no means were tried before the institution of Ragged Schools to suppress street begging. The most strenuous and persevering efforts were made. The police did their utmost, but these urchins were as ill to catch and to hold as eels. The Magistrates, pregnant with great things, issued proclamations against begging or giving charity in the streets. What cared these city Arabs for proclamations? not a straw. They could not read them. They went for nothing with others as well as with them. For, so long as hunger stretched out its skinny hands for bread, so long as poverty shivering in squalid rags appealed to human pity, and childhood's sad face, looking as if it had never been lighted with a smile, looked up imploringly into ours, kind hearts were not to be drilled into withholding charity.

If, listening to what men call prudence, we ever refused our pittance, how did their ghastly faces seem to stare on us as we sat at our comfortable table—marring its enjoyment? They haunted busy fancy in the darkness of night; we saw the creature returning wet, and weary, and hungry, to be beaten by a brutal father or drunken mother; or cowering cold and sleepless, like a houseless dog, in open stair or beneath some shed or archway.

Let me illustrate what, ere our schools were opened, was the condition of many among these children, by a case which occurred last year. Returning in one of the fiercest storms I have faced, from the opposite end of the town, it was with difficulty I made good my way round the base of the crags on the south side of the Castle Rock. Entering our picturesque High Street, where I kept the "cantle o' the causey" to avoid smashing chimney-cans, and passing homeward along some of our busiest thoroughfares, I found them all but cleared, as by rounds of grape shot. Though a day on which a man would not have sent out a dog, I saw a child seven years old in one of the streets. Poor wretch! he stood in the flooded gutter, his rags glazed with the rain, and the storm pelting on his bare head; it was pitiful to see him emaciated and shivering,

and hear his attempts to sing. Of course, I was stirred with indignation against the brutal parent who could turn out an infant in such weather; and use its misery to plunder the humane of money—to be spent, no doubt, in damning drink. On giving a little charity, and bidding the creature go home immediately, I heard one say, "That's right, sir, send him to Dr. Guthrie's Ragged School." On turning round, I found the speaker, buttoned close up to the throat, with a cap pulled over his brows; he had the appearance of a decent, sober, well-conditioned mechanic. A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind: and, pleased with his humanity, I could not but introduce myself. How luminous, though begrimed with smoke, his face became! He thrust out a paw, black as the back of his forge, to shake hands. I accepted the compliment as from a duchess. All honour to the moral worth and honest kindliness that glowed in the man's look, and were felt in a grip like a squeeze of his own vice. That, by-the-by, set down here to the credit of humble life. Resolved to be at the bottom of the case, I put myself in communication with the police, and learned this child's history. His father had become a drunkard; afterwards a thief; and was at that time undergoing a sentence of banishment. His

mother, perhaps first broken-hearted, was a dissipated woman. Beside this, and another boy still younger, she had a daughter twelve years of age—just ripening for ruin. Heedless of that, their mother hounded them out in all weathers, and at all hours of the night as well as day. She would have drink, though she were damned herself and damned them too.

Save that case, I have not seen one of the kind in our streets for years. But before the Ragged Schools were opened our city swarmed with many hundreds in a condition as helpless, and as hopeless. Now the juvenile beggars are all gone. The race is extinct. What has become of them? They are not mouldering in the grave, the last refuge of wretchedness; nor are they pining in prison cells, turning the weary crank, and cursing those who have dealt them out nothing but neglect and punishment. They are off the streets, and in our schools. Once no care was taken of them, and no provision made for them; therefore a humane public, supplying them with money, fostered a system much more ruinous to those that got, than costly to those that gave. Their vocation is gone. If any now solicit charity, the answer is not money, or a rough repulse, or a curse, but—"Go to the Ragged School." There

is no excuse left either for begging or giving. And the consequence is, that we have done what neither police nor magistrates could do. We have succeeded in thoroughly putting a stop to juvenile mendicancy. The magistrate, now in circumstances to pass on these unfortunates the happy sentence of daily bread, kind training, and a Christian education, sits with comfort on the bench—dispensing not law only, but justice. The wretched are happy; the lost are saved. Training up for useful occupations, they are on the way to become respectable men and women. Their little feet, turned from the prison door, are treading the pathway to heaven. A loving Saviour has his wish, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And in our school, where they are all busy as bees, sharp as needles, bright as the morning, happy as the day is long, I never hear them sweetly singing their little hymns, but I seem to listen to the voice of angels and the song of Bethlehem, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

II. By means of Ragged Schools the number of juvenile criminals in our jails has been greatly reduced.

"The one half of mankind does not know how

the other half live," is a remark that applies with special truth to our criminal population. Every newspaper, indeed, has details of crime; but some read only the list of births, younger people only the list of marriages, and hangers-on for patronage, posts, and livings, only the list of deaths; politicians con leading articles, and merchants study prices current, *Sound Intelligence*, shipping lists, the state of stocks—whether they are up or down. Though a few dip into the police reports, and a scandalous trial is perused by many with avidity, and such monstrous cases as Palmer's in England and Miss Smith's in Scotland draw all eyes for a while, and people have a vague floating notion that there is a great deal of wickedness in the country, yet the amount of crime and the number of criminals are subjects of which almost all novel, and most news readers are profoundly ignorant.

It is not possible to give the exact numbers of those that infest society, and live by plunder; whose existence is a curse to us, and also to themselves. But we know the number of commitments; and taking the average from 1841 to 1850 for instance, the yearly number of convictions in England, both summary and at sessions and assizes, stands thus :—

Convicted summarily, males, . . .	56,055	
Do. at sessions and assizes, females,	17,201	
		73,256
Males, ...	22,439	
Females, . . .	5,299	
		27,738
		100,994
Add to these convictions in Scotland,		3,994
		104,988

That these numbers pretty fairly represent the state of crime, is evident from their correspondence with those given by Captain Williams in the following table, as the average of eight years preceding 1850 :—

Convictions summarily, . . .	73,582	
Do. at sessions and assizes,	28,101	
		101,683

According to other calculations, our criminal population numbers not less than 150,000. What a formidable evil! Here is a host of criminals, equal in number to the British army proper; and, strange to say, many who complain loudly of the expense of a standing army of soldiers have not a word to say against this standing army of thieves. Adding two persons, as on an average, dependent

upon each of these criminals, we have 300,000 of the worst characters, maintained, or, after a costly fashion maintaining themselves, at the public expense.

Thieving is a regular business; a trade which some conduct with the regularity of a bank or of a mercantile establishment. In illustration of this, let me tell what was told to me by one of the heads of a large publishing and bookselling house in London. Their premises consist of a shop facing the street; behind that a spacious room filled with valuable books; and beyond that again a reading room, supplied with newspapers and magazines. From the shelves of the middle room, they had from time to time missed many volumes. Unable to detect the depredator, their suspicions began reluctantly to rest on some of the young men in their employment. My friend, however, as he was one day ruminating on the matter, recollected the visits of a person who came frequently, and always passed on to the inner rooms; but never bought anything. This looked suspicious. Attired in black, wearing a white neckcloth, and presenting a venerable appearance, he looked not unlike a dignitary, at the very least, a dean of the church. Could he be the rogue? My friend dismissed the unworthy thought. However,

it recurred; and fixed itself in his mind. He resolved to watch. So next day when the old gentleman entered, and making, as usual, some remark on the weather, glided into the inner room, the publisher stationed himself by a small pane of glass which, from an outer passage, commanded a view of the interior. The visitor, looking very innocent, appears to be reading the titles of the books; but the mystery is soon solved. The poor wretch, thinking as little of the eye that watched him as sinners do of the eye of God, after looking round to see that the coast is clear, pulls a volume from the shelf to drop it into a capacious pocket; the process is repeated and repeated, till the pockets are full. And now, when the craft is loaded and about to sail, my informant comes forth. He arrests him. The thief protests, but in vain. He is committed to a police-officer; his address is taken, and in his house—a good one—among a great deal of stolen property, they find a regularly kept day-book. Here they see the books he has purloined all duly entered. Each day has a page or more for its own transactions; on such a day, for example, "Robinson Crusoe," "Drelincourt on Death," "The Newgate Calendar," "Law's Serious Call," "Gulliver's Travels," "The Pilgrim's Progress;" in one column the ordinary selling-price appears, in

another the price he got; it is, in fact, as regular a journal as Rothschild's, or any in the Bank of England.

I know not whether this person had received a professional education; but, as there are medical schools for doctors, and commercial academies for merchants, thieving is systematically taught in some of our large towns. One boy, for instance, gives this account of himself:—"His father was a soldier, and died when he was very young, leaving his mother unprovided for. The only means of her support was obtained by begging in the streets. She died about nine years ago. James, consequently, was left very young without any one to look after him; he soon fell amongst thieves, and was taken to Wentworth-street, in Whitechapel, to a house where he was boarded and lodged for six months, when he was taught to pick pockets. He says, that there were twenty more boys kept, beside himself, for the same purpose, by a man and woman who lived by their plunder. Daily the woman dressed herself, put a bell in her pocket, also a purse, containing 6d.; any of the pupils who could take the purse from her pocket without causing the bell to tingle, got the 6d. as a reward for his dexterity. He remained until he was a proficient pickpocket."

The extent to which this education is carried

may be judged of by the details furnished by one who was engaged in this shocking occupation. He said "He had been twenty years living a criminal life, and had been twenty times in prison. He resided in a low lodging-house, where he carried on his craft of training young lads to steal. The best hands among them were sent into the streets, and they brought home the plunder, on which the criminal school lived. He was too well known to the police to dare to go out himself. 'But,' said he, 'I never can keep the young 'uns long, for as soon as I have made them clever at their profession, if they are not taken by the police, they leave me and start for themselves; so that I am obliged to look out for new hands.' Being asked how many lads he supposed he had trained to be thieves during the twenty years, he replied that he had kept no account, and he could not exactly tell, but of this he was sure, that it was not less than *five hundred.*"

What an argument these cases furnish for Ragged Schools! Are we to leave these unhappy children to be regularly trained to crime; and then imprison, banish, and hang them when they commit it? Their blood is on our heads, if we do; nor will it excuse us to say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" It ought to make us ashamed of ourselves, that while

this hoary ruffian had trained five hundred children to a life of crime, we, perhaps, never took the trouble to save one.

This business often has enormous success. Three or four hundred pounds is not an uncommon income; and yet though that is a handsome living, paying no Income Tax, the annual gains of some are far greater—one family of coiners in England having cleared in a few years not less than twenty thousand pounds. The money which our criminal population spend on their vices proves indeed that, as a class, their gains far exceed the wages of our honest workmen. The amount of which they plunder others, without enriching themselves, may be conjectured from an astounding fact, stated by a committee of the inhabitants of Liverpool to the first Birmingham Association. According to their report, the annual depredations of all kinds in Liverpool alone amounted in value to £700,000. If the plunder in that one city amounts to nearly one million of money, how many millions does the whole country lose by crimes it has never taken the proper way to cure?

Whether it be better to establish Ragged Schools, and thereby cut off a great source of crime, or to have thieves levying such enormous revenues, as appear in the following tables, let the public judge.

Here are some specimens of the incomes which thieves make, and the loss which the community suffers :—

1.	Richard Clarke, during	a career of	6	years,	£2820
2.	John Clarke,	„	5	„	500
3.	Edward Clarke,	„	3	„	1650
4.	Ellen Clarke, (O'Neill)	„	2½	„	1550
5.	John O'Neill,	„	9	„	1450
6.	Thomas O'Gar,	„	6	„	300
7.	James O'Brien,	„	3½	„	1400
8.	Thomas M'Giverin,	„	7	„	1900
9.	Thomas Kelly,	„	20	„	8000
10.	John Flanagan,	„	14	„	5800
11.	John Thompson,	„	5	„	1800
12.	John Bohanna,	„	6	„	1500
13.	J. Shawe,	„	3	„	600
14.	W. Buckley,	„	7	„	2100
15.	Sarah Dickenson,	„	3	„	630
					£32,000

But let us fix our attention on one individual of this group ; let it be Flanagan. He was seventeen times in prison ; and caught fifteen times besides, but discharged for want of evidence. In 1850 he got to the end of his *tether* and was at length transported. Here are his transactions during three years ; and the tables, be it observed, do not include any sums under £10, although he stated that these considerably exceeded those above that sum :—

1838 and 1839.

Value.	Where robbery committed.	From whom.
£20	Concert, Liverpool . .	A gentleman.
15	Theatre, Liverpool . .	A gentleman.
11	Zoological Gardens . .	A lady.
30	Coach-office, Liverpool .	Proprietors.
46	Auction, Broughton Road	A lady.
30	Auction, Cheetham Hill	A lady.
15	Auction, Pendleton . .	A lady.
21	Manchester	A till from a liquor-vault.
50	Manchester	A till from a public-house.
11	Leek, Stafford . . .	A shopkeeper.
85	Hanley Races . . .	A gentleman.
49	Northallerton Fair . .	A drunken farmer.
12	Liverpool Packet . .	A passenger.
18	Liverpool Packet . .	A passenger.
30	Liverpool Packet . .	A passenger.
45	Horncastle Fair . . .	A lady.
17	Leeds Fair	A butcher.

1840 and 1841.

10	Lincoln Fair	A gentleman.
14	Lincoln Fair	Captain of a boat.
10	Spalding Fair . . .	A farmer.
11	Horncastle Fair . . .	A maltster.
10	Liverpool Races . . .	A gentleman.
16	Liverpool Races . . .	A farmer.
17	Chester Races . . .	A lady.
11	Manchester Races . .	A lady.

1841 and 1842.

Value.	Where robbery committed.	From whom.
£10	Manchester Theatre . .	A lady.
70	Bury Fair	A cattle-dealer.
250	In the street, at Manchester	An officer.
15	Knutsford Races . . .	A jockey.
30	Doncaster Races . . .	A publican.
18	Nottingham Races . .	A butcher.
14	Derby Races	Unknown.
13	Crowle, Lincoln . . .	A publican's wife.
12	Caister, Lincoln . . .	A farmer.
11	Market Raisin . . .	A gentleman's servant.
60	Brigg Fair	A farmer's wife.
21	Louth, Lincolnshire . .	A coachman.

&c. &c. &c.

How cheap it were to prevent crime, compared with the cost either of maintaining or of punishing it! It is hard to say whether our folly or extravagance has been most conspicuous. Committed to jail, and maintained there in a state of comparative ease and idleness, the felon lives in some respects like a gentleman. Why, such a sum of money was spent in building York Jail that the lodging alone for each prisoner there is equal to an annual house rent of £40. Every criminal in jail costs the country, at an average, £30 or £40 a year; and while honest men have to eat their bread in the sweat of

their brow, these, as if the most meritorious members of society, are found in coal, candle, food, clothes, and lodging. With what advantage? The system has proved a greater waste than pouring water on a sand-bed—the culprit has gone in a bad man, and comes out a worse.

Contrast with this system that which, in old times, obtained among the Jews. Apart from its divine character, how wise the legislation of Moses! A Hebrew, for example, stole an ox; what then? They did not throw him into jail to herd with congenial rogues; or to pine in idle solitude; or to fret at the weary crank—a wretched device, which, turning nothing but an index, is enough to turn the sweetest temper into gall and bitterness. Still less, by the execution of a sentence out of all proportion to the offence, did they commit murder in the name of law, and hang him up like a dog that worries sheep. In this case *paying* the penalty was no figure of speech. By way of punishment he was required to pay four times the value of the ox; thus, the injured person was amply compensated, while none were tempted to suffer wrong rather than convict the wrong-doer; for most people will feel that the loss to them of a few pounds is only made the greater by knowing that the man who took them is

to be hanged. But what if the culprit had not the wherewithal to meet his punishment, the money to pay the price of four oxen? Mosaic law provided for this, condemning him to work as a temporary slave till he had earned the full amount. Now, look at the results! In the first place, the injured party suffered in the end no wrong, having the full value of what he had lost repaid; secondly, the country had to bear no burden, the criminal having to maintain himself during the time of his punishment; thirdly, the thief himself, if idle and useless prior to his offence, became, ere he had atoned for it, a skilled, industrious workman. If we read our Bibles to better purpose, we would neither treat our decent poor so harshly, nor manage our criminals so foolishly.

We have thousands of the latter class, though not as in former days, rioting, or rotting in jails, lying there in comparative idleness. Why are they not turned out to build harbours of refuge; to make roads; to drain the land? Enclosed within a *cordon militaire* and employed on such works, we would get some good out of them; and better still, they themselves brought into a healthy condition both of body and mind, and trained to regular habits of industry, might become, so soon as the term of their

sentence was fulfilled, useful citizens either at home or in the colonies. We would thus relieve ourselves of a great burden, and bestow on them a greater boon.

But prevention is better than cure; and so we now ask why should not Ragged Schools be applied like the salt of Elisha to the fountains of crime—the springs of the cursed and bitter waters? Three hundred pounds is the average cost for each criminal before the country has done with them, and that is usually when they are dead; how much better at the cost of merely thirty pounds—all that is needed for the full education and maintenance of a child at a ragged school—to save them from ever entering on a life of crime? The numbers required year by year to recruit the ranks of criminals gives unspeakable importance to that question. The average period of their career is short, not extending beyond five or six years; and it is calculated that not fewer than twenty thousand annually are enlisted into this devil's regiment. The greater part of these are children.

This opens up a dreadful view; and I should fail in my duty if I did not state broadly that most of those children owe their ruin to drink—to the dissipated habits of their parents. Intemperance is

the horrid Moloch, the ugly blood-stained idol to which so many young victims are annually sacrificed. Drunkenness, directly or indirectly, supplies our Ragged Schools with scholars, our jails with prisoners, and our poor-houses with by much the largest number of their tenants. In England, the portals to these are gin palaces and beer-shops; in Scotland, are whisky and dram-shops. But for this vice, we should have no rags, nor Ragged Schools in our cities; few paupers to lodge in poor-houses; and many of our prisons, like one I found in an old burgh in Fife, sounding merrily to the music of feet and fiddle, might be turned into dancing schools. Talk of our weakness as a nation! The foreigner put his finger on it who said, It is a blessed thing that you Anglo-Saxons are a drunken race; you had otherwise conquered the whole world. Talk of our burdens as a nation! The people groan under no taxes to be compared with those which, by the consumption of wine, beer, and whisky, they impose upon themselves. The voice of our prisons is that drinking is the chief cause of crime; our judges have arrived at the same conclusion, and repeatedly expressed it from the seat of justice; and, however much they differ on points of theology, on this subject ministers and city missionaries of all denomina-

tions are of the same opinion. And it is instructive to observe that drinking is the great spring of crime in those parts of the continent where the habits of the people approach our own. It was stated the other day, for example, by Lord Brougham, on the authority of Obermeyer, the well-known and enlightened governor of the prison in Munich, that there and in Baden almost every crime was traceable to intemperance—to the use, or as some would say, the abuse of beer and wine.

I will not enter on the question whether Scotland is a more drunken country than England. With all its drunkenness, I will not deny my country. I would find that perhaps as useless as did an Irishman of my acquaintance. He had a touch of the brogue; yet so boldly claimed to be an Englishman, as to silence if not convince us. Unfortunately for him, an Irish lady who lived in our *pension* in Paris, had not forgotten, though she had resided long in France, the habits of her country. Fixing her keen gray eyes on him one day at dinner, she said, "I know you, sir, to be an Irishman"—choking the lie in his throat by this characteristic, and to the English and Scotch part of the company, most diverting reason, "I know it, sir, by the way you peel your potato!" I could not if I would deny

my country; and I would not if I could deny its crimes, since the way to cure evil is to expose it. Still, as late Government returns demonstrate, the amount of drinking in Scotland has been grossly exaggerated; and it would not be difficult to prove that drunkenness is as great a curse on the south as on the north side of the Border. It is but fair to both countries, however, to remark that a large proportion of what appear to be our crimes, is due to Irish Roman Catholics—their presence among us making us appear much lower in the scale of morality than we would otherwise do. Look, for example, at this extract from the Police Tables of Liverpool, from Sept. 1858 to Sept. 1859. Its Irish inhabitants are, of course, far fewer than its English population, yet observe how the following offences committed by them are almost equal in number to those committed by the whole English inhabitants of that great English town :—

	By English.	By Irish.
Assaults on women and children, .	111	86
——— on peace officers, . .	562	494
Assaults, common, . . .	824	661
Drunkenness, and drunk and disorderly	4912	4080
Larceny under value of 5s., . .	784	836

I consider it as one of the most promising signs

of our age, that the public are now coming to regard intemperance as a gigantic evil. Should they not? It can be proved to demonstration, that every shop opened for the mere purpose of drinking, whether wine, beer, or spirits, is injurious to the *well-being* of society; is not only a public house but a public nuisance. The wonder is, that our country has so long tolerated a system whereby a few build up fortunes out of the wreck and utter ruin of many. Indeed, I am surprised at good, excellent, pious Christians continuing to lend the influence of their example to the use of such stimulants; knowing as they do, that these ruin, have ruined, and will continue to ruin, not once for all, but year by year, the happiness, and homes, and bodies, and souls of thousands. They destroy the peace of so many families, and doom so many children to starvation and rags; they drive so many poor girls to the streets, and so often blight the fairest blossoms of youth; they break so many loving hearts, and bring so many gray heads with sorrow to the grave, that I have felt constrained to say, I will drink none of them while the world standeth, lest I make a brother to offend. It is due to the cause of Total Abstinence to add, that while in joining its ranks, I sought only the public good, I have found my own in four personal advan-

tages—stronger health; a clearer head; a lighter heart; and a heavier purse.

While the dissipated habits of many create that supply of juvenile delinquents which keeps up the number of our criminals, these, trained by their parents, or forced by circumstances into a life of crime, are far more deserving of pity than of austere punishment. One of our annual reports thus describes their condition:—

Found homeless, and provided with lodgings,	72
Children with both parents, . . .	32
With the father dead, ...	140
Mother dead, ...	89
Deserted by parents, ...	43
With one or both parents transported, .	9
Fatherless, with drunken mothers, . .	77
Motherless, with drunken fathers, . .	66
With both parents worthless, . . .	84
Who have been beggars, ...	271
Who have been in the Police Office, . .	75
Who have been in Prison, . . .	20
Known as children of thieves, . . .	76
Believed to be so, including the preceding, .	148

This is a modern edition of the prophet's roll; written within and without, with "lamentation, and mourning, and woe." Though a lady had once the

politeness to ask me whether I invented my stories, these, be assured, are facts, not fancies. How do they appeal to your pity, and recommend our schools,—the only hope they have, that are ready to perish? Formerly all these children found their way to the jail. No man cared for their souls, or commiserated their condition. Banishing what it did not hang, the country shipped off thousands to rot and fester in our colonies, till these, rising as one man, declared that they would have no more of our refuse and waste; that, if we would grow criminals, we should keep them. Many seemed born for the gallows; and coolly calculated on being hanged, —as sailors do on being drowned, or soldiers, in time of war, on being shot. I happened once to find them at their rehearsals. They had a ragged urchin suspended by a rope thrown over the door-lintel of an old house. The noose was dexterously placed under his arm-pits; but the way he hung his head, and mimicked the dying spasms, drew up his legs, and kicked, was perfect. So thought his companions. The young savages danced round him in wildest glee, and greeted each kick with roars of laughter. They were familiar with hanging; nor much wonder, since Newgate, for instance, used to show ten or a dozen old ruffians with boys, strung up like vermin, and slowly

turning round in the morning air, with their white caps,—waiting to be cut down. Horrible sight!

Before showing how Ragged Schools—better every way than hanging, banishing, or imprisoning—have met the evils of society, let us glance at the statistics of juvenile criminals in England. They are very appalling. The number of juvenile offenders committed in one year was not less than 15,507; and in another year 11,420. Of these, one only had received a superior education; and of the whole 11,420, there were only 196 who could read and write well; and since such a smattering of education as leaves a man unable to read with ease is, for all practical purposes, no better, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, than no education whatever, out of 11,410 juvenile delinquents, there were in fact 11,223 who may be said not to have been educated at all. What a disgrace to the nation! And what right had society to come down with its vengeance on those it had so shamefully neglected?

Now, to show how Ragged Schools meet this evil, and furnish the best cure for crime—the cheapest, most humane, and holiest remedy—look at the effect of our school on the prison! It is very remarkable. As the rooms of the school filled, the cells of the prison emptied. Our increase was their

decrease. The stream flowing into the jail grew less and less, and it was plain to every body that we had struck one great spring—and were draining it off. Here are the returns furnished by Mr. Smith, the excellent governor of our jail. Our school was opened in the summer of 1847, but could not tell much, of course, on the returns of that year.

In 1847	the centesimal proportion of children under 14 years of age in prison was	5.6
1848	. . . . .	3.7
1849	. . . . .	2.9
1850	. . . . .	1.3
1851	. . . . .	.9
1858	. . . . .	1.7
1859	. . . . .	1.2

There has been also a remarkable decrease in the commitments of prisoners from 14 to 16 years of age.

The number of prisoners between 14 and 16 years of age was, in

1848	552
1849	440
1850	361
1851	227
1858	138
1859	130

These returns demonstrate the success of our schools; since, in the short space of four years, we reduced the commitments of juveniles to one-tenth

part of what they were before the schools were opened: and what variation appears in these returns down to the present time, only proves the necessity of a more extended application of our system. It may be regarded as a work of supererogation, yet I add the testimony borne by the head of our police. He says, "I cannot too strongly express my sense of the value and importance of the Ragged Schools, as one of the principal means of ameliorating the condition of destitute and outcast children, and rescuing them from those evil influences, which, if unchecked, must necessarily lead to make them hardened criminals. Being fully persuaded that the extended operation of such a system is the most likely agency for arresting the alarming progress of crime in our large towns, I cannot but state my earnest conviction that, on grounds both of humanity and expediency, the Ragged Schools have the highest possible claim on the public for continued and increased support."

It is very satisfactory to know that all the Ragged Schools in Scotland show corresponding results. And though the system of Ragged, Feeding, and Industrial Schools has not been so fully applied in England, yet there also the effect of these, or of kindred institutions, has attracted the attention of the public

authorities. In a speech, for instance, delivered lately by the Chairman of the Sessions for the West Riding of Yorkshire, he noticed the marked decrease of crime, and attributed it to the fact, that "a large number of little boys, instead of being now available as assistants to bigger thieves, are lodged within the walls of Reformatories or Ragged Schools."

Like the Hebrew High-Priest, arrayed in sacred vestments, and holding aloft the smoking censor, we have stood between the living and the dead; and have stayed plague. We have arrested the waters that were descending headlong into that Dead Sea, on whose arid shore no green thing grows, in whose waters no creature lives, to whose dark bosom the stream runs in but not a drop runs out; not only so, but we have turned them aside to bless and fertilize the land. We have stayed the progress of crime. Leaving others to wear blood-stained laurels, and boast of thousands slain in battle, we esteem ourselves happier; we point to thousands plucked from the jaws of ruin and saved for society—not a few of them, we trust, for God and heaven. For these schools, therefore, as a means of checking the course of crime, of turning wretchedness into happiness, vice into virtue, a nation's weakness into a nation's

strength, and public burdens into public blessings, I claim the eulogium of Holy Writ; "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all."

III. By means of Ragged Schools, thousands of miserable children have been turned into happy and valuable members of society.

"Understandest what thou readest?" the question which Philip put to the Ethiopian is one I keep in view on occasional visits to the Ragged School. The words, "bed of down," occurred one day in the lesson. I asked their meaning. The children knew little of "down;" to soft beds, soft words, soft endearments, they had been strangers till we took them into our arms. They were fairly puzzled; though sharp as needles, and very precocious—a well-marked feature of creatures whose wits are sharpened at a too early age, on the hard grindstone of necessity. At length a bright idea struck one little fellow. His eye gleamed with triumph, and, sure of vaulting to the top of the class, he blurted out, in case any one should anticipate him, "bed of down, sir, bed of down is a bed on the floor!" Poor child! it was all he knew of it. There was more real misery than Irish wit in that answer.

Would that all mothers, when they bless and

kiss their little ones snugly wrapt in cosy cot, thought of those who are more familiar with blows than blessings; never knew a mother's love; get more curses than caresses; and lie down, many a night, shivering and hungry on the naked floor.

How much human misery is unveiled, and what a touching appeal is made to our kind compassions, for instance, by this fact? Some years ago, measles broke out in our school. Domiciliary visits were paid to the sufferers; and of fifty-five cases there were but three where we found even the vestige of a bed. Of these little sufferers, fifty-two had no bed-clothes but their body rags, nor couch but the bare hard boards of the floor. Our dogs and cats have comforts which Christian men and women withhold from their fellow creatures. And how people, not flint-hearted, who hear of such facts, and see these children prowling haggard, hungry, and wolf-like about the streets, can bend their way home to "eat the fat and drink the sweet," nor give a sigh to this misery, or a sixpence to these wants, is to me a mystery. Calling themselves followers of Jesus, in the sympathies of his nature they are not so. Kind and blessed Lord! he had tears for all human suffering. He made himself poor that he might make others rich—withholding neither his love nor his life

blood. Surely many forget that Self-Denial, not Self-Indulgence, is the motto of our faith. Since the days when, helmed for battle with men or monsters, brave knights rode forth from castle gates to right the wrongs of the oppressed, sharing their loaf and dividing their cloak in winter among miserable wretches, more than chivalry seems gone. One would sometimes think that Christianity herself was dead; and mute the voice which said, "Is not this the fast which I have chosen, to deal thy bread to the hungry; and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; when thou seest the naked that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"

Our schools are nothing else than a practical application of these rules—the rules of a Book which teaches you that by the very test to which we are submitting them, you shall yourselves be tried. And woe to the man who, on trial for his life at the bar of a righteous God, shall have to face as accusers one, and another, and another, that point to him, saying, "I was an hungered, and he gave me no meat; I was thirsty and he gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and he took me not in; naked, and he clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and he visited me not." Then shall Jesus say, "In-

asmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."

God forbid that I should judge any! Only I cannot comprehend the humanity of the man who stands on a stormy beach with a wreck before him, drowning wretches hanging in its shrouds, their pitiful cries wafted to his ears, their imploring hands stretched out to the shore, and who does not, I don't say leap into the life boat when its crew are calling for another hand, but who does not regard this dreadful scene otherwise than with cold indifference. Nor do I understand the religion of the man or woman who does nothing to save poor boys from a fate worse than shipwreck, and young girls from one worse than twenty deaths. Death! The life of crime before them, should they survive the cold, and hunger, and neglect, under which they sink by thousands into an early grave, is such that I have been thankful to see them dead; lying in their rude coffins; safe in God's arms; away from the brutal father, whose staggering step and boisterous voice, that poor, pale, peaceful form, no more trembles to hear. It was an awful thing to see a mother who hung over her sick boy's couch, and fondly kissed him, drop on her knees, and passionately pray to God that he might never rise from that bed, but die

—die there. No wonder! Eleven summers had gone over that young head, yet life had been all bitter winter to him. He had been starved by a drunken father; driven on the street; forced into crime. None of those who went to church wrapped up in comforts, Bible or Prayer Book in hand, had cared for him, poor wretch! He had to steal, or to starve; do wrong, or die. He had been thrice in jail. And seeing no prospect for him but the cold hands of the hangman working about that young neck, what wonder that his mother wished him dead—willing rather to trust him to the mercy of her God than to what they call the justice of men. Think of the miseries that wring such prayers from a mother's lips! and hasten to our help—it is "the help of the Lord against the mighty!"

Now, of all means, Ragged Schools offer the surest, shortest way to an end devoutly to be wished for. Prisons and punishment are acknowledged failures; so are street alms; so is casual charity, whatever shape it assumes. In too many instances it feeds, not the children, but the vices which are their ruin; and thus exasperates the misery which benevolence seeks to relieve.

Here is the way we treat the case. These children, as I have already stated in my Second Plea,

come to our school in the morning, and do not leave us till evening. Those whose homes are so cruel or so vicious that they would certainly suffer from passing the night there, sleep within our walls. In the words of Count de Metz, the founder of the celebrated school of Mettray, "We go to the work with the gospel in our hands;" our highest object being to train them in the knowledge of divine truth—in the fear and love of God. They receive a good secular education; and are brought up also to industrial occupations. The girls learn to sew, to knit, to wash, to cook; while the boys are trained up as tailors, shoemakers, and boxmakers, or carpenters. In our country establishment—within a mile of Edinburgh—teaching them to handle the axe, the hoe, and the spade, we fit them for emigration or rural labours. So much time, each day, is allotted for play. Every morning they go through their ablutions with Eastern precision; and to ensure regular attendance, as well as meet the necessities of their poverty, they daily receive three plain but substantial meals. Punishments are rare. We work by love and kindness; and, though on entering our school they were foul as the gutter out of which they had been plucked, unbroken as the wild Arab or wild ass of the desert, ignorant of everything that is good, with rags

on their backs and misery in their looks, such change comes over them that better-behaved scholars, sharper intellects, happier faces you will see nowhere.

Talk of Rarey, the celebrated horse breaker! we accomplish feats that outshine his. I remember one day seeing a child just brought in from the Police Office. It was a little lean, withered, old-looking creature; lost in a gown, made for a grown-up woman; its head buried in a large, faded, coal scuttle-shaped bonnet, the relic of a bygone fashion, at the far end of which one could see a wild, woe-begone face. Poor soul, it was plain that she had never been at school before; she sat amazed, still as a post, as if her queer, stunted figure had been cut out of stone. Nothing about her looking alive, but the two grey eyes which went rolling round and round in blank amaze, she had all the look of a newly-caught hare, seized in her form. Yet in three weeks you would not have recognized that child; such a marvellous change do the allied powers of patience and porridge work! These creatures gradually lose their savage air; the sharp angularities of starvation get beautifully rounded off in fat and flesh; health blooms on the rosy cheek; and the hangdog, cunning, low, suspicious look gives place

to an honest bearing, and an open, cheerful countenance. There are not a few very pretty children in our school; and as to the girls, with their industrial training, they are more likely to be frugal wives, better able to mend their man's coat, to darn his stockings, to dress his linen, to cook his food, and keep a tidy house and clean fireside, than lasses with gay ribbons and more pretensions. Such are the children within our school.

But what of the fruits of the system as brought out in their future career? Since our doors were opened in 1847, besides many who received a partial education, and not a few whose parents, rising into better circumstances, removed them to higher schools, not less than FIVE HUNDRED children have left our walls to play their part in life. They are playing it well. Considering the great disadvantages of their outset in life, we have to state as a marvellous, as well as most gratifying result, that as large a proportion have proved themselves honest, industrious, useful members of society as any other class can show. This more than rewards all our anxieties and labours; and cannot be contemplated by any right-minded persons without their heart warming to Ragged Schools. Yon gallant boat that plies between the wreck and shore, and on which, as she

rises to the swell of the sea, all eyes are intently fixed, is but an image of our schools. If our work has not the splendour that surrounds brave deeds, it boasts a better and more enduring glory. It has saved the perishing from a wreck worse than the stranded ship's—from a fate far worse than the bubbling groan and brief struggle of men whelmed in the deep. It is pre-eminently a Saviour-like work. We go to seek the lost. And five hundred children saved shows how heaven has smiled on our efforts, and what a promising field Ragged Schools open up for Christian benevolence! Nowhere else can labour and money count with such certainty on meeting with an ample reward.

It seems like lowering a noble cause to introduce the consideration of money to plead for it on the score of economy. It is a great stoop to come down from the lofty heights of Religion, Pity, Humanity, Justice, and Mercy, to pounds, shillings, and pence. Yet I can demonstrate that ours, the kindest and holiest, is also the cheapest policy. It has been calculated, as I have already stated, that every child left to grow up into a criminal, costs the country, on an average, not less than three hundred pounds. Let us suppose then that but one half of the five hundred, whom this single school has saved, had run

a career of crime; they would have involved the State in an outlay of seventy-five thousand pounds. Now, during the twelve years of its existence, our school has cost some £24,000; the amount, therefore, saved to the country is just the difference between that sum and £75,000—that is, £51,000. But make the much more probable supposition that at least two-thirds of these children would, but for our school, have developed into full-blown criminals, then, besides rescuing them from a life of crime and misery, we have saved the state in actual money, a sum, in round figures, equal to the difference between £24,000 and £96,000. With that fact before them, a saving in twelve years of £72,000 effected by this one benevolent institution, were our Governments and Parliaments wise, and not, to use a common proverb, penny wise and pound foolish—Ragged Schools would be regarded as having the foremost claim on the public funds. They would be made to cover, as a net-work, all the wretched districts of the large cities of our land.

Seventy-two thousand golden sovereigns, fresh from the Mint, piled up in a glittering heap on the floor of House of Commons, would represent the money gain accruing to the country from the operation of our school. A sight this enough to dazzle the eyes and

win the patronage of a Chancellor of the Exchequer; yet some three years ago, I saw its golden harvests gathered on our floor after a nobler fashion.

Many of our children, on completing their education, have gone forth to the ends of the earth. Some are in Canada, felling the forest; some in New Zealand and Australia are tending flocks: others have fought in the Crimea, and others in battles on the deep. Besides those who had gone abroad as emigrants, or entered the army or navy, we knew that a goodly number of them were, with erect and honest bearing, walking the streets where they once prowled—outcasts and beggars. So, about three years ago, when constituents were giving banquets to their members, and joyous cities were feasting the heroes of the Russian war, we resolved to pay some honour to those who, in their own field, had had as hard a fight and as difficult a part to play. Cards of invitation were accordingly issued to such of our old scholars as we could find in town. The fete came off about Christmas time. We did the thing handsomely. Our largest room was brilliantly lighted; ivy, branches of laurel, and holly with its coral berries festooned the walls; while long tables groaned under ample stores of coffee, tea, cookies, buns, and cakes of all sorts. It fell to me, as a kind

of head of the house, to do the honours. The hour of reception arrived. The tread and shuffling of many feet rose on the stairs. The living stream set in—a constant succession of sober, well-to-do like young men and women, with all of whom, of course, I heartily shook hands; wives, once Ragged School girls, were there, with blushes and honest pride, introducing their husbands to me; and husbands, once Ragged School boys, their wives. There they were; all well, some even genteelly dressed; without a rag on their backs or trace of wretchedness in their bright and happy faces; self-supporting; upright; earning by honest industry wages that ranged from the three or four shillings a week of the apprentice boy to the thirty or forty shillings of the skilled workman, shopman, or clerk. It was a marvellous sight!

Old neighbours were astounded at the sad change time had wrought upon Naomi. On seeing the widow bend her steps along the streets of Bethlehem, grey with age, meanly clad, and stooping beneath a load of grief and poverty, they could hardly believe their eyes; but held up their hands to cry, "Is this Naomi?" I was ready, for opposite reasons, to ask, "Are these my Ragged School children? The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." They were a hundred and fifty in all.

What happy faces they wore! How joyous to meet again within those walls! With no stronger stimulants than tea and coffee, their spirits rose to the highest pitch; and what a merry ring was in their laugh! What heartiness in their fun; and also in their feeding! How some of them did enjoy themselves! One of my daughters, who presided at a table, told me of a boy who drank an ocean of tea, ten cups at the least. The evening flew away on lightsome wings—songs were sung; good counsels given; prayers were offered and blessings asked. We lingered over the scene. Nor could I look on that gathering of young men and women—so respectably clad, and wearing such an air of decency—and think what, but for the Ragged School, they would have been, without tears of joy—gratitude to God, welling up to the eyes. It was a sight worth living for. It was our harvest home. "Our joy was according to the joy of harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil." Such are Ragged Schools! Trees of life, let them be planted in every city; their leaves are for the healing of the people.

In drawing this appeal to a close, let me remark that while there is no machinery so well fitted ultimately to raise the lowest classes, the *classes dangereuses* of our large cities, there are few even of our

small towns that do not need a Ragged, Feeding, Industrial School. Nor should benevolent people wait until the school, with its rooms, and staff of teachers, and board of directors is set up. There is a quiet way of reaching our object, of saving the lost, in which many might engage who are idly wasting their time and talents. None of us liveth to himself; no man or woman should. Yet, in this country, what an immense amount of female power is latent —lost to God and to the world? I know a person in humble circumstances—she is a blacksmith's wife—who, sparing some hours each day for the work, has educated not a few of the neglected children of the village where she resides. Her name, though unknown to fame, is known in heaven; and, better than on gold or marble, is graven on loving hearts. How many ladies there are, who, treading in her humble footsteps, could change a languid, into a bright, happy, blessed life! In this world of sin and misery time ought not to be wasted on trifles; and need hang heavy on no one's hands. What is to hinder many in circumstances of ease and comparative affluence, to collect some half-dozen of neglected children into a room, and, spreading before them one plain meal, devote three hours each day to their education? These well-spent hours, like drops of oil spreading

on the waters, would diffuse themselves in blessings and pleasure over all the day. Our island has one Miss Nightingale, and one Miss Marsh, and others of kindred spirit though less known to fame; it might have thousands from their modest shades filling the land with music, and winning for their names the honour of household words in the abodes of woe and wretchedness. If these ladies, by God's blessing, have subdued and softened man in his roughest state, what might others accomplish with plastic childhood in gentle hands?

I address myself once more to the public—to people with heads to understand and hearts to feel. We went to the Government for aid; and notwithstanding the sympathy of the ministers of state, somehow or other, by the interference probably of officials, it was like "going down to Egypt" for help. We have leaned on a broken reed. The public purse which supplies an affluent stream to those schools that educate the children of the reputable and well-doing part of the community, strange to say, yields to our Ragged Schools nothing but the merest dribble. Those that should be first are put last; and the last are first. While the child of the artisan, the shopkeeper, the manufacturer, or the merchant, is, to a considerable extent, educated at the

expense of the country, this wretched creature, with pinching hunger in its face, foul rags on its back, its naked, red, ulcerated feet on the icy street, and in the damp cellar or cold garret where it lives, neither bed nor bible, comfort nor kindness, gets nothing from our public funds but a niggardly pittance. It is a cruel injustice. Talk of class legislation! What class legislation so bad as this? For a brief period, in answer to importunity like the widow's, we got fifty shillings a year for every child of the abandoned classes trained within our school —only one third of the cost. But now, and all in a day, this fifty shillings has been reduced to five. Five shillings in the year comes to about half a farthing in the day; and so *one half farthing* per day is the encouragement and help we get toward saving a hapless, helpless creature from crime, the prison, the hangman. Munificent donation!

Incredible mockery as this seems, such is the fact. I am not aware that there is anything to match it in any other department of public affairs. Its injustice and folly are still more plainly brought out by the contrast between the liberality shown to those institutions which attempt to reform the child who has committed crime, and the niggardliness dealt out to such institutions as ours, that reckoning pre-

vention better than cure, seek to destroy crime in the very bud. As if cure were better than prevention; as if physic were better than food; as if it were an advantage to a boy or girl to bear the jail brand; as if the prison were an admirable school of spotless virtue, true honour, honest industry, and Christian piety, the state allows seven or eight shillings a week for every child whom the public leaves to grow up into a criminal, and to find its way into a prison. To the man who, like a fool, postpones education till the child falls into crime, and is brought out of the jail to school, the Government gives *one shilling* per day; and to the far wiser man who, catching the child, so to speak, on its way to the prison, by education destroys crime in the egg and germ, the Government grants but *one half-farthing* per day. What a monstrous state of matters! It is high time that it were put an end to. We hope that Her Majesty's Ministers will see to it—and that the country will instruct its representatives to see to it!

We have sinned in time past against these children; condemning innocence; and in dissipated, wicked parents allowing guilt to go free. We have punished those whom we should have pitied; and committed those to prison whom we should have

sent to school. I hold it to be a primary duty of the State to see that every child within its bounds is educated, and that no parents be allowed to bring up their children in savage, dangerous ignorance. While our courts of law require every man who holds any office of trust to discharge its duties with fidelity, why should parents be allowed to neglect the most important of all trusts? If they are willing but not able to educate their children, let that be done at the public expense. If they are able but not willing, let the law compel them to do their duty. No man is at liberty in this land to starve his child's body, and the interests of society imperatively require that he should not be left at liberty to starve its mind, and bring up his family to be a burden, a danger, and a curse to the community. It is a great wrong to leave a child uneducated. It is a still greater wrong to punish it for crimes which are not its guilt, but ours—the infallible consequence of our criminal neglect.

The day was when they shut up such children in prisons with hardened ruffians, or immured them in lonely cells to pine away the sweet spring-time of life where they heard no birds sing, nor saw the blue sky, nor the blessed sunshine. In the last century they did worse. From the grim door of a

prison they brought out two children to the scaffold —a boy of twelve, and a girl of eleven years of age. Pitiful sight! two shivering creatures, beneath the black gallows, and a hoary executioner putting aside their flowing locks, and baring their young necks for the rope. Calling it justice, they hanged those infants up before the astonished sun! This shocking murder was done in England in the reign of George II. That was the old system; ours is the new. Our motto, "Prevention is better than cure," and vastly better than punishment.

We gladly hail the dawning of a day, when, the State, trusting more to schools and less to prisons, shall recognise its duty in this matter. Three hundred years ago, John Knox, our great Scottish Reformer, long one of the most misunderstood and best abused of men, laid it down as the duty of the Government to take care that every child within its bounds received a useful education: and to the same principle, one of England's most liberal-minded and profoundest thinkers has lent the authority of his mighty name. John Foster advocates not only "friendly but *cogent* dealing with all the people of inferior condition relatively to the necessity of their practical accordance to plans of education." He treats "with contempt any hypocritical protest against so

much interference with the discretion, the liberty of parents—the discretion, the liberty, forsooth, of bringing up their children a nuisance on the face of the earth."

Meanwhile, however, and until the happy day when, without encroaching on the domain of conscience, the State shall secure for every child within its borders a useful education, Ragged Schools offer the only remedy for most clamant evils. Without them thousands are doomed to perish. They were an experiment; they are a success—a glorious success. May they never cease to flourish, till these lines cease to apply to this great, but guilty land:—

> "The land has groaned beneath the guilt of blood
> Spilt wantonly; for every death-doomed man
> Who, in his boyhood, has been left untaught
> That Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness,
> And all her paths are peace, unjustly dies.
> But ah! how many are thus left untaught!"

APPENDIX.

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No. I.

SUPPLEMENT TO FIRST PLEA.

THE "Plea" fell much like a small spark among combustibles, calling forth a very general and lively interest in the welfare of the outcast children of society. For some time after its first publication, every day brought letters expressing sympathy and offering co-operation. The public were impatient for the organization of a scheme, and a public meeting at which it might be launched. Such a meeting, patronized by gentlemen of all ranks and denominations, was at length held. Our scheme was launched amid the plaudits of a concourse of spectators; and while many watched its progress and followed it with their prayers, off it went to save the castaways. We constructed our scheme after the model of those in Aberdeen and Dundee. These had been in all respects universally approved of; and it was unanimously carried, without a murmur of disapprobation, far less one dissenting

voice, that our School should be, in the main, modelled after their fashion of these. This accordingly was done; and in Appendix II., the reader will find the Rules and Constitution of our Edinburgh School, as proposed by the Committee, and unanimously adopted by a large meeting of the citizens. For some short while matters went smoothly enough. There was confidence within our Committee, and no cloud without. And the happy, I will say the holy, spectacle was seen of men who had been at war now cultivating the arts of peace, forgetting differences in a common object, and meeting with swords turned into ploughshares, to break up the ground which had long lain fallow.

At first we did not attempt much. There was great difficulty found in procuring suitable accommodation for the Schools in a central part of the city.* Besides, the objects of our charity, being unaccustomed to subordination, had to be disciplined and broken in. There could not be a greater mistake, or a grosser misrepresentation, than to allege, as was done, that the small number of our scholars was owing to any aversion which the Roman Catholics felt to participate in the benefits of our School. I was warned against sweeping in an unmanageable number at first, by a circumstance which I heard, when Lord Ashley took me to one of the Ragged Schools in London. It was situated in Westminster, and had a remarkable history. Some time before it was turned to its present purpose, this building had been used as a tavern. It was the favourite rendezvous of the thieves of that district. There they met to plan, and from thence they issued forth to execute, their deeds of crime. Even then, they had a sort of Sabbath school in it; but what a school! The room was filled with the ruffians and robbers of the neighbour-

* This difficulty has been in a great measure removed through the kindness of the Rev. Mr. Smith and the Kirk-session of the Tolbooth parish, who have in the meantime accommodated us with a large and commodious school-room at Ramsay Garden, Castlehill.

hood. At one end the younger thieves,—those who were in training,—pursued the art of pocket-picking. If the lesson was not well-performed, the bungler was apprehended and dragged by a sham policeman to the other end of the room. There, in caricature of a court of justice, sat a presiding ruffian, dressed out in the wig, and gown, and garb of a Judge, by whom, amid all the formalities of the law, the culprit was tried. In the course of this mock assize, he was taught how to fence and evade—when to be silent, and how to speak—so as to prepare him for the time when this farce should pass into a dreadful tragedy. Beneath that very roof where unhappy outcasts had been trained in wickedness and sin, we found a Ragged School in admirable order—filled with the very objects of such a charity. Among others, we remember two. A boy was pointed out to us, whose bed, during winter, had been the hollow of the iron roller in one of the parks. The other had been brought to the school by one of the most notorious thieves in the neighbourhood, who implored them to receive the child as the only means of saving him from ruin; adding, when his strange request was granted, and he looked round on the scene, these touching words, "Had there been such a school as this when I was a boy, I had not been a thief."

In this, or in another school, the circumstances happened which were a warning to us against gathering all at once a large number of these neglected and undisciplined children. A school had been opened in another and very wild and wicked part of London. When a considerable number of boys had been brought together, the teacher ordered them, if I remember aright, to produce the books with which they had previously been furnished. Each of them put his hand into his pocket, and produced, not a book, but a tobacco-pipe. He remonstrated. They answered him with clouds of smoke. The upshot was a row; and the master, over-mastered, was glad to escape with life and limb. Such an issue here was not to be risked. We began with a small

number; and were gradually filling up, when symptoms of that controversy began to appear which has now ended in an open rupture.

In a newspaper of this city, it was asserted by an anonymous writer, that Roman Catholics were excluded from our School. Our Committee was most unwilling to waste on controversy the time and attention which might be better employed; so we neither took in sail, nor shifted our course, nor stayed one moment, to answer these random shots. People, however, being ready to suppose that what is not answered is unanswerable, the Committee at length found it necessary to give this reckless assertion the answer which it admitted and deserved—a distinct denial. At the very time that charge was made, one-half of the children were the children of nominally Roman Catholic parents. Obliged to abandon this position, the ground of attack was shifted; and now it was asserted that we were violating the Constitution of the Society, and conducting the Schools so as virtually to exclude Roman Catholic children. In their own defence, and in answer to the charge of introducing "a system of religious tests into the Schools, and of excluding, in Roman Catholic children, the largest portion of those children for whom the Schools were designed," the Acting Committee published a "Statement," which, along with a "Minute of the General Committee, approving of that Statement, will be found in the Appendix to this "Supplement." Though the efforts of the Committee were successful in satisfying a large portion of the public there still remained some of our original subscribers, between whom and the Committee there was an important, and, as it proved to be, an irreconcilable difference. These gentlemen requested the Lord Provost to call a meeting, for the purpose of having "it clearly ascertained whether the Schools will be conducted on a system which must necessarily exclude children of the Roman Catholic, or any faith which differs from that of Pro-

testant teachers." It was now feared, though not openly proclaimed, that an attempt would be made to exclude the Word of God from the Ragged School, and limit the education to secular instruction, leaving the Protestant and Roman Catholic parties to manage the religious interests of the children as they best might. The question whether the Committee had acted honestly and fairly on the regulations approved of at the first public meeting, now sunk into comparative insignificance. It was swallowed up in the larger and far more important question, Shall the candle of Divine truth shine in these Schools, or not? Shall God's saving Word be taught to these unhappy outcasts, or not? The battle which had begun in Aberdeen and Dundee, had now extended to the capital; and the public meeting which had been called by the Lord Provost was, more than any meeting which had been for a long time held in Edinburgh, looked forward to with the liveliest interest by the warmest friends of Bible truth, and the wisest friends of these unhappy children. An attempt was made by some parties to represent the Committee as the enemies of religious toleration. Large bills covered the walls of our city, summoning the friends of toleration to rally in the Music Hall, to counteract our sectarian proceedings. This attempt to pack the meeting met with a signal failure. The Music Hall was crowded, but not with the parties whom this bill was meant to call out. Whether they were ashamed of it or not, we do not know—but, with the exception of a very small portion of the audience, that immense and influential assembly, embracing Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Independents, expressed its entire and hearty approval of the step which the Committee had taken, in resolving that the Word of God should be taught during the ordinary school hours, and that true religion should form an essential part of education. Edinburgh never uttered its voice more distinctly or more decidedly on any question, or on any occasion. We never went to a meeting with so much anxiety, nor left one with so much thank-

fulness. It was a blessed sight to see Protestants of all Evangelical denominations, and those of them who but a few years before had been arrayed against each other in the Voluntary and Non-Intrusion controversies, now fighting, side by side; rallying around the Bible with the kindness of brethren, and the keenness of men in earnest.

Holding it to be the very principle of Protestantism that every man should be free to judge in matters of religion, uninfluenced either by fear or favour, we would tamper with no man's conscience. By the bread of a Ragged School, to bribe a person to abandon his faith, is in principle as bad as it would be to revive the fires and tortures of the Inquisition. We abhor the use of all such means; but we as much abhor the claim which Romish priests or their tools make to limit the free, full, and unrestricted use of God's revealed Word. Imaged by the sun of heaven, the Bible is common to all, needed by all, and the right of all. He violates as much my spiritual rights, who stands between me and the Word of God, as he does my natural, who stands between me and the light of day; and certainly the greatest favour which the Roman Catholic priests could confer on those to whom they offer their services, would be to do for them what the philosopher in his tub requested might be done for him by Alexander the Great—"Stand out," said Diogenes, "between me and the sun."

The ground we took up may be stated in a single sentence. Considering the condition of the children, and the character of the parents, who are living without the fear either of God or man, and do not even make a profession of religion, the principles which might rule a national system of education do not apply here. Here the question cannot even be entertained, whether the religious instruction might not be safely left to the parents. Those for whom these schools are established are untaught, uncared for, helpless outcasts. As to the state of their parents, that may be well illustrated by this fact. In a mixed population of nominal

Roman Catholics and Protestants, out of the first two hundred and fifty individuals in the Old Greyfriars' parish whom we visited on first coming to Edinburgh, there were not more than five who ever darkened the door of church or chapel. To the children of families, therefore, which are to all intents and purposes heathen, we are bound to act as if they were heathen children. One of the first things we have to do, as the best for their well-being both in this life and in the life to come, is to teach them the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. Their souls, not less than their bodies, are cast upon our care; and in such a case we dare not and cannot plead the excuse of Cain,—"Am I my brother's keeper?" If, however, it should happen that some decent Roman Catholic parents found it necessary to send their children to our Ragged School, the Committee, as will be seen from one of their regulations, were willing to commit them to their parents' charge upon the Sabbath day. Beyond this they could not go. They could not yield to a Roman Catholic priest the right of withholding from any child of Adam the Word of God. It is a matter of thankfulness to find, that in the resolution which we have adopted, and the position which we have taken up, we have met with so much Christian sympathy; and I cannot afford a better example of this, nor, perhaps, more effectively close this Supplement, than by submitting to the public the following letter, which I had the honour to receive from the Duke of Argyll:—

"Roseneath, July 8th.

"Rev. Sir,

"I beg to be allowed to have my name placed on the list of Subscribers to the Ragged School which you have had such a principal share in founding, and the management of which, as regards the subject of religious instruction, you have so ably, and, I think, so triumphantly defended.

"I must apologise for the smallness of a contribution which, but for the urgent claims of a large and necessitous population, would have been somewhat more commensurate with my sense of the value and importance of the object.

"I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without expressing my humble but entire approval of the course which the Committee has pursued on the point above referred to. Between all those bodies which are commonly included under the term Protestant communions, there is so large a common ground, that there ought to be no difficulty whatever in teaching effectively, and with purpose, yet without sectarian bias, the doctrines and precepts of Christian truth. But the differences between them and the Roman Church are so numerous, pervading, and important, that the teaching which avoids them all must, I think, be formal, vague, and pointless. The nearest approach to anything which can be called religious teaching, compatible with such as system, is probably that contemplated by the Irish national scheme, in which readings are selected from the Bible. This has been supported by many excellent and able men. Not having any abstract objection, as some have, to the principle of selections, but thinking that everything depends on how large and ample such selections are, I should be sorry to say a word against a scheme which may be the best or the only one possible in the peculiar circumstances of that country. But certainly I hold that such a scheme, as applied to the 'ragged' children of our great towns, would sacrifice a very large amount of positive and practical good, for the attainment of very small and very doubtful benefits. Where it can be reasonably expected that children, in addition to such (comparatively meagre) readings, will receive more positive instruction from parents, or guardians, or others interested in their welfare, the plan may not in itself be objectionable: Protestants will then not lose by the omissions—Romanists may be allowed their benefit. But where no such expectation can reasonably be

formed, the Protestants *must* lose much, and may lose all that is positive in religion; whilst the Romanists will be in danger of being bound to their own communion only by its grosser ties—by its observances, its priesthood, or its absolutions—and lose all those deeper influences which have raised, and doubtless are raising, in the Roman Church, as earnest, as devoted, and as spiritually-minded Christians as the best who have believed in purer creeds.

"On these grounds, as well as on others which I cannot now refer to, I conceive such a plan to be essentially bad as applied to Ragged Schools; and as the Committee seems to me to have been unjustly assailed, I think it the duty of those who approve of your course in this respect to come forward now in its support.

"I am, Rev. Sir,

"Yours faithfully,

"ARGYLL.

"The Rev. Thomas Guthrie."

No. II.

CONSTITUTION AND RULES OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RAGGED INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS FOR DESTITUTE CHILDREN IN EDINBURGH.

1. IT is the object of this Association to reclaim the neglected and destitute children of Edinburgh, by affording them the benefits of a good common and Christian Education, and by training them to habits of regular industry, so as to enable them to earn an honest livelihood, and fit them for the duties of life.

2. With this view the Association shall establish and maintain one or more schools for such children, in such parts of the city or suburbs as may be found most advisable.

3. The following classes of children shall be excluded:—1st, Those who are already regularly attending Day-Schools;—2d, Those whose parents are earning a regular income, and able to procure education for their children;—3d, Those who are receiving, or entitled to receive, support and education from the Parochial Boards;—with this declaration, that it shall be in the power of the Acting Committee to deal with special cases, although falling under any of these classes, having regard always to the special objects of the Association.

4. The Association shall consist of all Subscribers of Ten Shillings per annum and upwards, and of all Donors of Five Pounds and upwards.

5. It shall be governed by a General Committee, consisting of fifty Members (fifteen being a quorum), and an Acting Committee, consisting of twenty-five Members (five being a quorum), with a Secretary and Treasurer. The Acting Committee shall be entitled to be present and vote at all Meetings of the General Committee.

6. A Meeting of the Association shall be held annually, in April, when a Report of the proceedings shall be read, and the Committees and Office-Bearers elected for the ensuing year. The Acting Committee shall meet at least once every month.

7. The Acting Committee shall have power to elect the Office-Bearers, to appoint Local Committees, and to make laws and regulations to be observed in conducting the business of the Association; and all Schools to be established by the Association shall be subject to such laws and regulations; but no school shall be established without the consent of the General Committee.

8. The appointment of Teachers, and other officers, shall be made by the Acting Committee.

9. The general plan upon which the Schools shall be conducted shall be as follows, viz.—

To give the children an allowance of food for their daily support.

To instruct them in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

To train them in habits of industry, by instructing and employing them daily in such sorts of work as are suited to their years.

To teach them the truths of the gospel, making the Holy Scriptures the groundwork of instruction.

On Sabbath the children shall receive food as on other days, and such religious instruction as shall be arranged by the Acting Committee.

No. III.

STATEMENT BY THE ACTING COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR ESTABLISHING RAGGED OR INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

THE Committee having had their attention called to certain articles and letters in a respectable newspaper in this city, of a nature fitted to cause misconception and distrust in the mind of the public on the subject of religious teaching in their schools, think it necessary to publish the following statement:—

By the Constitution and Rules of the Association it is declared, that "It is the object of this Association to reclaim the neglected or profligate children of Edinburgh, by affording them the benefits of a good common and Christian education, and by training them to habits of regular industry, so as to enable them to earn an honest livelihood, and fit them for the duties of life;" and, in regard to the general plan upon which the schools are to be conducted, it is declared that the children shall be taught "the truths of the gospel, making the Holy Scriptures the groundwork of instruction;" and that "on Sabbath the children shall receive

food as on other days, and such religious instruction as shall be arranged by the Acting Committee."

The Constitution and Rules, from which these quotations are taken, were fully discussed at a large meeting, in the Council Chambers, of the Preliminary Committee appointed by the Lord Provost, and approved of by them. They were thereafter submitted to the public meeting in the Music Hall, and received the unanimous approval of that meeting; and the general plan of the schools has been kept prominently in the view of the public in all the statements and appeals issued by the Committee with a view to obtaining contributions for the schools. From the large amount of subscriptions that have already been received, the Committee are happy to think that the principles of the Association have met with the general confidence of the public.

These principles have been, and will continue to be, faithfully adhered to in the management of the schools. The religious instruction conveyed at these schools must necessarily be of the most simple and elementary kind, so as to be adapted to the tender years and gross ignorance of the children. Its entire freedom from all sectarian bias is effectually secured by the superintendence of a Committee impartially selected from the various leading religious bodies composing the great bulk of the community. The only books hitherto used in the school have been the Bible and the First and Second Books of Education, published under the superintendence of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland. The Committee feel that they cannot hope for a blessing on their schools if religion is not the pervading principle of the instruction given to the children.

The instruction on the Lord's day is conducted on like principles as on week-days, though, of course, it bears a more purely religious character. In order to meet the case of those parents who may have conscientious objections to their children receiving the more special religious instruction communicated on Sabbath,

or attending public worship with the teacher, provision is made that such parents, provided they are in a condition to be entrusted with the care of their children, shall be allowed to withdraw them for the purpose of attending their own place of worship, of whatever denomination.

The Committee feel assured that this explanatory statement will be sufficient to satisfy the public that the accusations brought against them, of introducing a "system of religious tests" into the schools, and of "excluding the largest portion of those children for whom the schools were designed," are entirely without foundation.

It must be obvious that an institution of this kind, intended to provide a home, food, moral, and industrial training, as well as the ordinary branches of scholarship, for children otherwise utterly destitute of all these, is by no means on the same footing with ordinary day schools, in which applicants may select the branches they may wish to attend; and cannot, therefore, be judged of on the same principles. The Committee view themselves as not in the position of mere ordinary instructors, but as coming, in the great majority of cases, in the place of parents, with regard to the temporal as well as spiritual interests of the children. As parents, they cannot throw off the responsibility attaching to them of enlightening the minds of the children; and, in so doing, they cannot but give them that instruction which is best calculated to reclaim the children from the miserable condition in which they are found. It would be utterly ruinous to the plan, and defeat all its benevolent purposes, especially considering the criminal and vagrant habits of the children who are to be benefited by it, if any other system were adopted than that of subjecting them all to the entire moral and religious discipline—simply based upon the Word of God—which it purposes to bring to bear upon them.

It may be added, that although it has been alleged that those principles of this Association which are now attacked are peculiar to it, the Committee do not know of any institution of the kind now in existence in Scotland which is not founded upon the very same principles.

The Committee conclude with expressing their unanimous and earnest desire to follow out thoroughly the sound principles on which the Association is founded. They ask to be judged by what they are now doing; and to be believed when they state, in the strongest manner, their anxious wish to avoid sectarianism, and to pursue their work earnestly and cheerfully in the spirit of their Divine Master, who went about doing good. They request the public to visit the schools, and to judge for themselves whether they are efficiently and properly conducted.

By appointment of the Acting Committee,

AND. JAMESON, *Convener*

Edinburgh, 14th June 1847.

At a meeting of the General Committee of the Association for Establishing Ragged or Industrial Schools in Edinburgh, held in No. 6 York Place, on 18th June 1847,

The LORD PROVOST in the Chair,

The following resolutions were moved by JAMES CRAUFURD, Esq., Advocate, seconded by Dr. W. P. ALISON, and agreed to:—

That this meeting approve of the "Statement of the Acting Committee;" but since it appears that some misapprehension prevails in regard to the principles on which the schools are conducted,

Resolved,

1st, That the General Committee emphatically disclaim all intention of using the advantages held out by these schools as a

means of tempting Roman Catholics to the abandonment or compromise of opinions which they conscientiously entertain. The reclaiming of children from ignorance and crime, not their conversion from Romanism, is the aim of the Committee and the object of the schools; and the Committee rejoice to know that, both in Aberdeen, and hitherto in Edinburgh, the children of Roman Catholic parents have attended the schools without any objection being made.

2d, That no catechism, or other formula of doctrine, is or shall be taught to any child whose parents object to it.

3d, That children are and shall be excused from attendance at school, or at worship, on the Sabbath day, whose parents object to their attendance, and undertake that the children are otherwise religiously instructed, according to the tenets of the communion to which they belong, provided they are in a condition to be entrusted with the care of their children.

No. IV.

TABLE OF SCHOOL HOURS AND EMPLOYMENTS.

THE children are at school twelve hours each day in summer, and eleven in winter. At present they meet in the morning at eight, and go away in the evening shortly after seven o'clock. The eleven hours are disposed of as follows:—

	Meals and Play.	Lessons.	Work.
From 8 to 8½, Ablutions . .	½	„	„
... 8½ to 9½, All working . .	„	„	1
... 9½ to 10¼, Breakfast and Play .	¾	„	„
... 10¼ to 11, Calling Roll and Bible Lesson, . .	„	¾	„

					Meals and Play.	Labour.	Work.
From	11	to	1,	One-half in school-room and other half in work-room, .	„	1	1
...	1	to	2,	All walking, . .	1	„	„
...	2	to	2½,	Dinner, . . .	½	„	„
...	2	to	3,	All in school-room, .	„	½	„
...	3	to	5,	One-half in school-room other half in work-room,	„	1	1
...	5	to	6½,	All working, . .	„	„	1½
...	6½	to	7¼,	Supper and closing, .	¾	„	„
					3½	3¼	4½

Only one hour is counted from eleven to one, and from three to five, as then only half of the boys are in school-room and work-room.

No. V.

LETTER FROM DR. GEORGE BELL.

27 York Place, December 25th, 1848.

MY DEAR MR. GUTHRIE,—The table showing the composition of the Original Ragged Schools is made up of terrible details. It affords subject-matter for the wisest men to ponder, constituting, as it does, an analysis of a sample only of the largest and sorest evil which afflicts the body social of this country.

One item, not included in the table, might appear to many to be a strange one. Thirty per cent of the children ran away from the Ragged Schools, "and came back, or were brought back, and then attended." It may seem strange that they ran away, and this after food had been given to them, clothing had been put upon them, and kind treatment had been exercised to-

wards them. The key to the explanation of the phenomenon is to be found in this: they are callous to what we understand by *hardship*. They don't know home, neither do they know aught about friendship. From infancy they have catered for themselves; they are ignorant of what is expressed by the word *risk*; they are independent; they resist the very gentlest restraint, and their first impulse is to escape from it; they have no love for what they never experienced; and they do n't fear that with which they are familiar. Hence the smallest offence to their freer than Arab feelings is cause enough for them to endeavour to escape from school, and resume the more than savage life to which they have been habituated from their earliest infancy. It is very encouraging to know that "running away from school" is daily becoming less frequent; and that of those who run away, the number of instances in which the parents bring them back is on the increase. This, I think, affords evidence of two things;—first, that the schools are gaining character in the estimation of the children; and, secondly, that they are acting reflexly on the class to which the children belong.

The title of the famous "Plea," by which you stirred the towns of Scotland, and of England likewise, not excepting the metropolis, has been proven to embody a truth, wherever it has been tested by the establishment of Ragged Schools on the principles so clearly propounded in the "Plea," and so manfully vindicated when they were impugned. "Prevention *is* better than cure;" and it is likewise *cheaper* than cure. In contrasting the cost of cure with the cost of prevention, let it be borne in mind that it is the "ragged" children who either are or become the thieves and vagabonds for whose detection such an immense police is maintained in this country, and for whose safe custody such gigantic prison establishments are necessary. These children by degrees acquire a title to be transported; and, ere they grow to be men and women, very many of them are sent to join their parents

and acquaintances, who constitute the almost devil population of Norfolk Island. The supply of these "ragged" children is very great; the cost of their maintenance (they live by plunder) is enormous; and the price of them to the country, when they are recognised by the law, is prodigious.

Mr. Smith, the admirable Governor of the Edinburgh Prison, permitted me some time since to study a set of tables of jail statistics, which he made two years ago, and which are perhaps the best, as well as the most extensive, that were ever constructed. Among other memoranda, I extracted this one:—In the years 1841-42-43, the cost of prisoners committed to the Edinburgh Jail for "theft and reset" was £11,632 : 6s. The numbers committed for this crime during these years respectively, were, 1963, 1811, 1932—in all, 5706; and the yearly average therefore was 1902. The total average number of commitments for *all offences* during these three years was 16,653. Thus the commitments for *theft* amounted to no less than 34 per cent of the whole. These prisoners were maintained in prison at the rate of £12 per annum. Now I am quite safe in saying, that nearly all these prisoners belonged to the class to which the "ragged" boy belongs. Is the question one of finance? Then look, dear sir, at the other side of the account. Here I must quote from the Original Ragged School Report of last year. It is dated March 31, 1848:—

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Total number of children admitted since the opening of the Schools . . .	310	199	509
Of whom, born in Scotland . .	186	82	268
... in England . .	11	2	13
... in Ireland . .	113	115	228
Total as above .	310	199	509

	Boys.	Girl.	Total.
Number above ten years of age .	161	118	279
Number under ten years of age .	149	81	230
Total as above .	310	199	509
Number that have died . . .	9	7	16
Number that have gone home to Ireland	3	4	7
Number that have left, or been discharged as not fit objects . .	119	54	173
Number that have found employment	21	14	35
Number that have removed to a higher class of Schools . . .	5	8	13
Number on the Roll at 31st March 1848	153	112	265
Total as above .	310	199	509

The number on the roll at this date are distributed as follows:—

In the Boys' School	105	
In the Girls' School	90	
In the Juvenile School (under ten years of age)	70	
		265

Of those on the roll at this date there are,—

Police cases, *i. e.*, children ascertained to have once or oftener passed through the Police Courts .	78
Note.—Of these, 18 are under 10 years of age.	
Children with both parents dead . . .	20
Children with one parent dead	118
Children deserted by parents	24

Children that could not read the alphabet on entering the School:—

In the Boys' School	40
In the Girls' School	29

And nearly all in the Juvenile School.

The Report says that the current expenses of the schools amounted to £820 : 10 : 6. Taking the number on the roll (265) at the date of the Report as a daily average, and deducting from it, say 50, as the daily number of absentees from sickness and other causes, we find that the children are fed and educated at the rate of about £4 per annum. The financial view of the question, therefore, involves contrast, and not comparison. £4 are paid for the ragged boy; £12 are paid for the incarcerated thief;* and the question is, which sum does the public prefer to pay? But I am much below the mark when I say that £12 is the sum paid for the incarcerated thief; for the law expenditure, a large per centage of jail expense, and the value of the property stolen by the thief, are not included in the account. What these amount to I do not know; but this I am aware of, —they are enormous, and the public pay for them.

I have said that nearly all the prisoners referred to belong to the class whose cause you have adopted, and advocate with such power. This class is *below* the pauper; it is not protected by the law. It is never noticed by the law until one of those belonging to it has been murdered, or one almost equally unfortunate has stolen a loaf, impelled by hunger, and undeterred by any moral sense. This class is entitled to be cared for before the members of it become criminals. It is just, it is politic, and it is economic.

I am unwilling to extend this letter; but the opportunity is a good one for placing a few criminal statistics before the public, that bear upon the cause which you advocate.

In the year 1841, at least 240 children, fourteen years old and under, were committed to prison. These cost at the rate of £10 each, which is equal to £2400 per annum. Is it not bet-

* The average cost per head of prisoners in all the prisons in Scotland is £16 : 7 : 4 per annum.—*Ninth Report of General Board of Directors of Prisons for Scotland*, p. 121.

ter to endeavour to save a boy at the rate of £4, than to harden him in sin and crime at the rate of £10, per annum?

Perhaps many of the readers of your appeal may perceive that the following memoranda, extracted from Mr. Smith's tables, contain an argument in favour of the extension of the Ragged School system.

During the years 1842-43-44 the number of children under ten years of age who were committed to prison amounted to 243.

During these three years, 232 individuals were transported; 64 of these committed their first offence when sixteen years of age and under; and it is remarked of many of them, that their nearest relatives were often in prison, and that not a few of them were transported.

Up to the year 1846, 3152 families, consisting of 3509 individuals, had furnished 10,706 commitments, being on an average three commitments to each person.

Of these families, 193 had sent 2 individuals to prison.

...	28	...	3	...
...	20	...	4	...
...	8	...	5	...
...	4	...	6	...
...	1	...	7	...

I must reiterate the observation, that the mass of the individuals to whom these memoranda refer belonged to the class which supplies the Ragged School with pupils.

You, in common with other accurate observers and just thinkers, trace famine, misery, and crime to the dram-shops, which are planted thickly in all the populous parts of our cities, as if with the design to ruin men, body and soul. With whom the responsibility of this ruination rests it is not for me to say, although I have an opinion on the subject.

The statistics of the Edinburgh Jail show that fifty-four per

cent of the offences for which individuals are committed to prison are the direct effects of drunkenness.

Seventy-three per cent of the crimes are committed *in* the localities where sixty per cent of the drinking-houses, properly so called, are situated, and fifty per cent of the spirit-licenses are held. Further, seventy-three per cent of the crimes committed in Edinburgh and the suburbs are committed by persons residing in the localities where the crimes are perpetrated.

These are memoranda from prison statistics, and they suggest very gloomy thoughts to the reflecting; but they don't tell half of the truth. In a note by Mr. Smith it is observed,—"The number taken to the Police Office in the three years ending December 1843, for drunkenness, was 13,858,—a number equal to about one-sixteenth of the population. Probably at least two-thirds of *all other* cases are caused indirectly by drunkenness. This will be more apparent when it is considered how many lose their character and employment from drunkenness, and are thus turned idle upon the public, with no other alternative than to beg or steal, for either of which offences they are sent to prison. Many of those who are too young to have become addicted to the vice, are the offspring of dissipated parents, and are very often left destitute, either by the desertion and neglect, or death, of those whose duty it was to provide for them. Again, some are compelled by dissipated parents to beg or steal, and the proceeds are expended in liquor." This note, when we consider who wrote it, and upon what an amount of experience it is based, is invaluable. The children alluded to by Mr. Smith are "ragged boys and girls."

The ragged boy has been kept prominently before the reader's eye, and the ragged girl has been in a measure concealed. Is there no pity for her? Her history is as dismal as that of her brother. I dare not trace it. The whole of it can be *seen* any day in two hours' time, by walking through the Grassmarket,—

looking into any of the little offices of hell which are rife in that locality, and each one of which is always thronged,—passing up any of the foul closes which open into the market,—entering a house there, and glancing over it (a glance is all that those whose duty has not forced them to tarry often in these dens of infamy *can* give),—visiting the Police Office and then the Calton Jail. In two hours their whole history can be *seen*, and much of it heard. Contrast the power of a pimpled spirit-dealer with that of a missionary, to influence such a terrible population as that to which I now refer. Why, sir, the spirit-shops are epidemic, and more deadly than the cholera. Each one of them is a centre of contagion, ever in activity,—of a contagion which slays with certainty, recovery from it, when caught, being hopeless. Much has been said against the "wee pawns." They are dependent things, and not worth speaking against or about, so long as that on which their existence depends is not only tolerated, but fostered.

I must now conclude this fragmentary letter; but before doing so, I may allude to the effect which the Ragged Schools has had upon the health of the children. They have had a marked good effect; and it is my belief that the rate of mortality is much reduced among them. Precise observations, however, on this subject are very difficult to make. Imperfect or false mortality statistics are worse than useless,—they are mischievous; and therefore I refrain from doing more than stating what my belief is regarding the effect which the Ragged Schools have had on the mortality of the children.

Believe me to be, my dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely,

G. Bell.

No. VI.

LETTER FROM SHERIFF JAMESON.

Rothesay, 20th December 1848.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have great pleasure in giving my humble testimony regarding the operation of the Industrial Schools lately established in Edinburgh.

For upwards of five years it has been my duty, as Sheriff-Substitute, first of Ayrshire and then of Edinburgh, to try a great number of young offenders in the Sheriff and Police Courts. The great majority of these, at least in Edinburgh, belonged to the unhappy class for whose benefit the schools have been instituted. It was my practice to examine into their history and habits; and I do not remember of one who, according to his own account, attended any church. A few had at one time or other been at a Sabbath school, and received there the little useful knowledge they possessed. The mass were the children of destitute and profligate parents, or friendless outcasts, without any home. Although living beyond the reach of the ministrations of the pulpit, or the instruction of ordinary schools, the class were well known to the police of the large towns, where increasing numbers and depravity have become one of our most formidable social evils. They frequently appeared at the bar of the Police Courts, charged with petty thefts, and were sentenced repeatedly to short imprisonments, until the number of their convictions entitled them to appear before a jury in the Sheriff or Justiciary Court. As far as my experience goes, this system of awarding short imprisonments in the case of these young offenders produces none of the effects for which punishment is intended. It neither deters nor reforms. On the contrary, it seems only to harden the heart and destroy the character. By the time the case permits the Judge to award an imprisonment of sufficient duration to give any

rational prospect of benefit to the individual in the way of moral and religious instruction, the character is generally lost irretrievably. The evil is increased by the faulty constitution of the Police Courts, in which a number of unprofessional magistrates sit, who change every month, and who, differing in opinion in regard to the objects of penal discipline, pronounce every variety of sentence. The consequence is, that the punishment being uncertain and variable, as well as inadequate, the evils of short imprisonments are increased: they become a subject of mockery among the criminals themselves; and these convictions become a sort of training school for crime. Between the three years from 1843 to 1846, as appears from a published Report of the Governor of the Edinburgh Prison, 740 children under fourteen years of age had been committed to that prison. It is painful to think, that in the case of the mass of these unhappy beings, their sentence had no other effect than to extinguish any fear they previously entertained of the prison, and destroy any prospect of obtaining honest employment. You may conceive the distressing situation of the Magistrate who is bound to sentence children from nine to fourteen years of age to repeated short imprisonments, with the moral certainty that each sentence is rendering them more hardened in crime, and diminishing the prospect of any improvement in their character or habits.

To Mr. Watson, Sheriff-Substitute of Aberdeenshire, belongs the merit of first organizing an institution for arresting this great evil. He has conclusively shown the practicability of placing almost the whole destitute and neglected children of a large town in Industrial Schools, before they are destroyed by short imprisonments, and, by means of a system of religious instruction and industrial training, reclaiming them from habits of idleness and vice. It has been publicly acknowledged, that this system has already effected a great saving to the criminal expenditure of the county. Sheriff Watson endeavoured to stimulate his brother

Sheriff to make a similar experiment in Edinburgh; but it was not until the Rev. Mr. Guthrie took up the cause, that the public attention was awakened to the subject in a way to make the attempt feasible.

Since these schools have been formed in Edinburgh, as Convener of the Acting Committee, as well as in the performance of my public duties, I have watched their progress with deep interest. I have frequently taken it upon me to send very young offenders to the schools instead of the prison, having first made careful inquiry into the circumstances of each case, and the history and habits of the party, and also conversed with and obtained the consent of the parents or nearest relatives, where they could be found. Some of the most interesting children in the schools were admitted in this way. I cannot say that I ever saw cause to regret making the experiment. On the contrary, after watching the conduct and progress of those young boys and girls for many months, I have been delighted to observe a steady advancement, not only in habits of attention and industry, but also in the knowledge of those sacred truths which can alone regenerate our fallen nature, and permanently affect the heart. In many instances, those children who had lived in habits of vagrancy, and commenced a course of crime, have given evidence of a degree of improvement under the discipline of these schools, such as I have never known to follow any of the repeated imprisonments I have been obliged to award in other cases. It is a remarkable circumstance, that their teachers find them very easy to manage, and that many show a wonderful aptitude for instruction. In visiting similar children in the prison cells, I found them generally sullen and stupid; but in the schools, though one or two have occasionally run off, complaining of the strictness of the discipline and the early hours, the great mass seem to enjoy a happiness and comfort to which, I fear, they have hitherto been strangers. To one engaged in the painful and often depressing duties attending the daily investiga-

tion and punishment of crime, I know of nothing which affords a more cheering prospect than the success of these schools. When the most powerful minds are perplexed on the question of penal discipline, and those professionally engaged in the administration of criminal justice find themselves compelled to confess the inefficacy of the present system of punishment to deter or reform criminals, or diminish their number, it is a most hopeful circumstance to find that there is an easier, less expensive, and more successful way of checking the gigantic evil, even by taking these neglected outcasts, from whom the criminal ranks are daily recruited, and by giving their minds and habits a new and healthy direction, bringing them under the influence of the fear of God, and making known to them a Saviour's love, by means of which their whole moral character may be elevated, and they may become useful members of society. It is enough to visit the institution in Ramsay Lane, to satisfy any reflecting mind regarding the actual good that is effected under this system. A more tangible proof is afforded by the diminution of juvenile commitments which has already taken place. This fact is stated in a letter addressed to me last spring by Mr. Smith, the Governor of the Edinburgh Prison, and which was referred to by Lord Ashley, in his memorable speech in the House of Commons last session. That an experiment on so limited a scale has already told on this unfortunate and dangerous class of our population, is an incontestible proof of the great permanent benefit that would result, if the schools were sufficiently extended to embrace the whole of this class of children in the city, instead of only including about an eighth or tenth part of them.

It has long been manifest to me, that such an institution, adequate to the state of the population, is as much needed in every large town as an infirmary or hospital for the sick, or a jail for ordinary offenders. No criminal preventive police system will succeed without it; and vagrants and beggars will swarm in

our streets, notwithstanding increasing poor-rates. In this view, such schools should be largely supported by a grant from the public funds, or by local assessment. It has been proved that the existing system, under which these outcasts run the course of convictions in the Police, Sheriff, and Justiciary Courts, is attended with enormous expense; so that the financial or economical argument is, as usual, all on the side of early religious and moral instruction.

In the meantime, and until our statesmen make up their minds on the subject, which is not without its difficulties, I trust the inhabitants of Edinburgh will not be behind those of Aberdeen, Dundee, and Perth, in showing the Government and the public the practicability of carrying on these schools, without risk of abuse, and in such a manner as to relieve the police and prisons of many poor children, who will otherwise fall into that melancholy course of habitual crime and continually recurring punishment which all deplore; and thus be instrumental, under the Divine blessing, and by means of a sound system of scriptural instruction, and moral and industrial training, in rescuing many who are ready to perish, from a life of guilt and a death of misery.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

AND. JAMESON.

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